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SOUTH INDIAN SCHEMES

SOUTH INDIAN SCHEMES

BY

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WITH A PREFACE BY

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LONDON

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PREFACE

THE College over which I have the honour to preside has been fortunate in securing, to share the duty of preaching with the Dean of Chapel, a number of clergy representing very varied subjects and opinions. Dr. Sparrow Simpson was our Preacher during last Michaelmas Term, and I have gladly undertaken, in response to his request, to write this preface as a small return for a course of sermons which we gratefully remember.

I am the more glad to write since I share his general conclusions. I am incompetent to form an opinion on the detailed and complicated historical questions with which Dr. Sparrow Simpson necessarily deals. There is only one such question on which I would presume to comment. The Church owes so much to Canon Streeter's writings that it is a thankless task to criticise his work. Very careful re-reading of his recent work on the origins of the Christian Ministry, and more particularly of his reconstruction of the part played by St. Ignatius, has led me to feel more and more, however, that on one point he misconceives the problem and minimises its difficulty. In passing from the positions disclosed in the Acts, the Pauline Epistles and the *Didache* to that reflected in the Ignatian epistles, what has to be explained is not merely the emergence of a single head in each local church in place of " com-

mittee government." Given suitable circumstances and a strong man, such a transition can take place in a fairly brief period and with comparative ease. When, however, a " strong man " is converting committee government into something like autocracy within a brief period, the almost universal process, because the far easier process, is for some relatively unimportant office to become all important or for a new office or title to appear, rather than for the individual in question to secure that he alone has applied to him a title which was previously enjoyed by a number of persons. The marked change in the use of the word " episcopos," the limitation of this title, is a further problem to, and a more difficult problem than, the emergence within a short period of " one man government " in particular churches. Concentration of authority, combined with a marked change of terminology, finds its most natural explanation in a deliberate and more or less authoritative decision to secure a concentration of authority. In default of evidence of such a decision, made in such a way as to possess at least very considerable authority, I can offer no solution ; but I distrust all solutions which do not supply an adequate explanation of a very curious fact.

The doctrine of " Apostolic Succession," in so far as it rests on particular decisions of historical questions, appears to me to involve views of a far broader character and to turn on conclusions which admit of far less dispute. We are accustomed by secular affairs to regard all forms of government as drawing their authority from the people, as devoid of any " divine right," and men are naturally inclined to transfer this cycle of ideas and prejudices to the government of the Church. We would view with so little seriousness the claims of any secular rulers to the transmission of

authority from a divine predecessor, that we are apt to ignore the very real difference which is involved if the Founder of the "New Israel" was indeed very God, not only entitled to our reverence, our gratitude and our love, but possessed of and conveying a unique and transcendent authority. The doctrine of the Apostolic Succession, the belief that no Christian Ministry is legitimate which does not possess historic continuity with the Apostolic government, is based on and witnesses to the fact and significance of the Incarnation.

There is, of course, involved the belief that our Lord did in fact convey authority to the Apostles and these in turn to those who came after them. There is not, however, involved any particular decisions as to the extent of initial diversity of administration or of methods of appointment or of concession of authority to prophets as such. The "prizes" which Canon Streeter distributes on this basis are, in fact, without significance. What matters is continuity with an original government, a continuity determined by development with the continuous sanction of the existing government rather than by the absence of development. Monarchical Episcopacy need not in principle have become the one form of government possessing such continuity, but it did in fact become so.

In regard to the first of the two antecedent historical issues, the Pauline Epistles and the Acts alike present a picture in which Apostles are represented not only as holding a pre-eminent position, but as exercising an authority received of the Lord. In regard to the second, while it is the case that the Apostolic Church was concerned primarily with the establishment of an ordered Ministry rather than with the conception of "succession," yet even the weight which the *Didache*

apparently possessed emphasises the importance attached to Apostolic injunctions as to the Ministry, and St. Clement's epistle not only reinforces this conclusion, but makes clear that at Rome the authority of the later Ministry was already conceived as drawn through the Apostles from the Lord.

Even so there remains the practical question as to how far existing irregular ministries may be validated under a doctrine of "economy." I would myself go further than I believe Dr. Sparrow Simpson would see his way to go, provided it was certain that from that point onwards the traditional rules as to ordination were fully enforced and the traditional Church order and sacramental system established and observed. Rightly or wrongly, I believe that, were these considerations secured, it would be possible to concede even more by economy than is suggested in the South Indian Scheme; but the length of the "interim" period, the lack of absolute certainty as to the requirement of episcopal ordination at the end of that period, and the unsatisfactory position as to confirmation represent a situation in which economy appears to lack its necessary background. When, however, all has been said by way of criticism, the whole South Indian movement, and the great advance towards agreement, are so remarkable as to afford a strong hope that, given sufficient effort, a satisfactory solution will be found. What it is of importance to secure is the absence of an intention to effect union in South India at the cost of increasing elsewhere the danger of disruption.

WILL SPENS.

18 *February*, 1930.
Corpus Christi College,
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SOUTH INDIAN SCHEMES

CHAPTER I

THE CONTENTS OF THE SCHEME

It is best to begin by sketching in outline the history of the proposals for reunion among the various Christian communities in South India.

The South India United Church was formed in 1908 by the blending together of various Congregationalist and Presbyterian Communions. Having secured this union of non-episcopal ministries, which in itself, considering their original antagonism, was a remarkable achievement, the South India United Church desired to extend their union to Communions possessing an episcopal ministry. The Indian Episcopal Church shared this desire. And in 1919 a more or less informal meeting was held between ministers of the Anglican Communion in India and the South India United. The Anglican members asked for acceptance of the historic Episcopate, which they explained to mean "acceptance of the fact of Episcopacy, and not any theory as to its character." The members of the South India United asked for recognition of the universal priesthood of all believers. Both sides were prepared to unite, so far as ministry is concerned, in agreement that acceptance of the fact of the Episcopate does not involve the acceptance of

any theory of the origin of Episcopacy, nor any doctrinal interpretation of the fact. It was further agreed that the terms of union should involve no Christian community in the necessity of disowning its past, and that it was no part of their duty to call in question the validity of each other's orders.

In 1920 the Episcopal Synod of the Province of India and Ceylon appointed a committee to consider the problem of reunion. This committee affirmed that "the principle of the historic Episcopate in a constitutional form is that which is more likely than any other to promote and preserve the unity of the Church, and accepted it as a basis of unity without raising other questions about Episcopacy."

The Lambeth Conference of that year, with its appeal on Reunion, greatly affected the overtures in India.

In 1923 the idea of a mutual Commission was proposed. The hope was expressed that this proposal would not be unacceptable, as the Anglican Bishops at the Lambeth Conference declared themselves willing to receive such a Commission. It was therefore resolved that a form of commissioning should be framed on lines which might be acceptable to all the ministers both in the Episcopal and the non-Episcopal communities. The non-Episcopal ministers would commission the Episcopal, and vice versa. A form of Commission was accordingly constructed.[1]

In 1926 the idea that the Episcopal and non-Episcopal ministers should mutually commission one another was reconsidered. The Anglican delegates reported that the proposed Commissioning Service had

[1] Bp. Bell, *Documents*.

been submitted by their Episcopal Synod to certain Anglican scholars, and that so far as opinions had been obtained they were unfavourable. The difficulty was that this proposed mutual Commission raised misgivings. It was ambiguous on the vital matter whether such Commission was or was not an ordination.[1]

Unfavourable opinions on the proposal of a mutual Commission were by no means confined to Anglican scholars. They were expressed in the plainest terms by leaders in the Free Churches in England.[2] The sentence in the Free Church reply to the Lambeth Appeal, that "to build a union in the Church of Christ on a conscious ambiguity was not, it seemed to them, to build in God's name and in God's way,"[3] was a criticism not likely to be forgotten, and, where remembered, to be ineffective. Whether the criticism was an accurate presentation of the facts is, of course, another matter. It was at least a demand for definite outspokenness. In India the proposal for a mutual Commission was laid aside. Two alternative proposals remained. One was that definite Episcopal ordination should be accepted. As the Bishop of Madras says, that alternative was inevitably not acceptable. The non-Episcopal ministers of the South India United Church would not accept Episcopal ordination. They could not deny their whole previous work by accepting an ordination which would imply that their present ordination was not a real ordination. Therefore, there was nothing left but to fall back on the other alternative; namely, to accept the ministries of all the uniting Churches. The Joint

[1] *Madras Diocesan Magazine*, April 1926, p. 114.
[2] Bell, pp. 118 ff.
[3] *Ib.*, p. 134.

Committee unanimously recommended that the existing ministers of the three Churches, namely, the Anglican, South India, *i.e.* Presbyterian and Congregational, and the Wesleyan, should all be accepted as ministers of the Word and of the Sacraments in the Church after Union. That was to be the agreement for the next fifty years. This is the period mentioned in 1926. But it was expressly added that it was the intention of those who made the union that at the close of that period no one shall minister in the Church unless he has received regular Episcopal ordination.[1]

After this proposal to accept within the same United Church both Episcopal and non-Episcopal ministries for a period calculated to amount to fifty years, at the end of which period all ministers should become Episcopal, the Anglican members of the Joint Committee felt it necessary to explain their reasons for attaching great importance to the historic Episcopate. They explained that two rules concerning the functions of the ministry are of similar antiquity and universality. One is that the celebration of the Holy Communion was confined to Priests, the other, that ordination was confined to Bishops. " We draw attention," they said, " to the fact that the great majority of Christians now living are living within a structure of which these two rules are important principles. We do not believe that the reunion of the whole of Christendom will ever take place except by return to these simple rules or customs about the ministry. Not to adopt them would be to shut out the South India United Church from one great hope of world-wide reunion. We do not at all wish to impose on the Church after union,

[1] *Madras Diocesan Magazine*, April 1926, pp. 108–15.

or on any member of it, the theories about these two rules or customs. But we have set down here our beliefs about them in order to explain why on our part we attribute to them a great and enduring importance. Hence arises our difficulty about admitting that ordinations otherwise made, and Sacraments administered by persons otherwise ordained, can be considered by us just as satisfactory or just as free from all doubt as those guarded by the ancient rules of the Church." [1]

The Anglican members, recognising that the proposal of a mutual Commission did not give satisfaction, suggested another solution. They are prepared to put before the Indian Episcopal Church, " that it should take the view that the existing ministers of the Church uniting with us belong to ministries which were raised up to them by God in times of difficulty when by the fault of no living man those Churches were unable to comply with the two ancient rules referred to above, and were enabled by Him to do evangelistic, prophetic and pastoral work in which we humbly perceive His hand; and that on these grounds ' the Episcopal Church ' should accept the existing ministries of the Churches uniting with us as ministers of the Word and Sacraments in the future United Church." It was expressly repeated that this acceptance of non-Episcopal ministers of the Word and Sacraments was to cease at the end of fifty years, and that at the close of that period no one would minister in the Church unless he had received regular Episcopal ordination.[2]

[1] *Madras Diocesan Magazine*, April 1926, pp. 116–17.
[2] *Ib.*, pp. 113–18.

To these proposals the non-Episcopal ministers of the Committee, Congregationalists, Presbyterians and Wesleyans, replied that "while adhering to the view that for the sake of the Union a constitutional Episcopate should be adopted, we do not accept the view of the history of the Episcopate and of its importance set forth" in the Anglican statement.

The proposal to accept both types of ministry, the Episcopal and the non-Episcopal, as equally ministers of the Word and Sacraments, is explained to involve "the practice by which members of either Church secure communion without question in the other Church, and ministers of either Church are free to invite ministers of the other Church to preside at Communion Services." [1]

Very interesting reflections on these Reunion negotiations were given in the *Madras Diocesan Magazine* for May 1926 by the Bishop of Bombay. He relates that it was made clear by the answers from England that the proposed form of mutual Commission would not be held to convey ordination to the Priesthood. "Our Church as a whole would not be really satisfied with anything less. At some time or other, before a man could be fully accepted throughout our Church as a minister of the Word and Sacraments, there must be a service which would be regarded as an indubitable ordination. Now the Commissioning Service proposed was not this in form, and also it was not intended to be so understood by the members of the South India United Church. The proposal failed doubly—it did not secure what many of the people wanted, and even if the form of it had been such as to secure this, our

[1] *Madras Diocesan Magazine*, April 1926, p. 119.

people would have meant it in one sense, and the South India United Church ministers would have received it in another—an ambiguity on which a permanent understanding would not possibly rest. Thus," adds the Bishop of Bombay, " although no authoritative body of our Church in India or of the Church of England had considered and reported on the Commissioning Service, I felt bound to tell the Joint Committee at an early stage that so far as I could judge the Commissioning Service proposal as printed is dead."

Thereupon it was suggested that their meetings should be broken off. This was averted, apparently largely by the efforts of the Bishop of Bombay. " It was at this point," he says, " that we took our boldest step." That step, as already related, was to accept the historic Episcopate as the ultimate goal fifty years hence, and meantime to accept the co-existence of Episcopal and non-Episcopal ministers of the Word and Sacraments. His own reflection on this " boldest step " is significant. " This method of solving one of the greatest difficulties in our way must necessarily lead to a most anomalous position. There will be one Church in South India, different members of which are in communion with Churches which are not in communion with each other. And for a while it will be difficult to say with what Churches the Church in South India, as a body, is in communion. This sounds, at first hearing, a most eccentric proposal, but it should be remembered that something like it has been contemplated by the Lambeth Joint Committee." [1]

These proposals were considered in the Magazine

[1] See *Report of Lambeth Conference*, 1920, p. 143.

for the Diocese of Lahore in June of the same year. It was there declared in a Pastoral Letter that " being, as we believe, entrusted with a principle which we are bound to bring into the reunited Church, we sometimes find ourselves obliged for the sake of the preservation of that truth to refuse to do things which are urged upon us, as means of showing our love to our brethren who are separated from us. And by our refusal we ourselves are pained and cause pain to others whom we desire not to wound. Our only comfort is the thought that pain keeps before our minds continually the sin of division and the necessity for repentance and amendment. To put it practically, if we believe, as we do, that the preservation of the historic ministry is a responsibility with which we are entrusted, we may not accept the ministry of sacraments which is not in accordance with that principle as we have received it. And so we find ourselves unable to receive such ministrations, not from any sense of pride or superiority in ourselves (God forbid), but after deep searchings of heart, because we feel bound to preserve the truth we believe to have been committed to the Church." [1]

A highly important Session of the Joint Committee on Reunion in India was held at Bangalore in June 1928.[2] Here the Resolution was adopted, " that in order to secure the full mutual recognition of the ministries of the uniting Churches, the existing ministers of the three Churches be accepted as ministers of the Word and of the Sacraments in the Church after union, with the distinct understanding that no minister

[1] *Lahore Diocesan Magazine*, 1926, p. 9.
[2] See Report of the Seventh Session.

ordained before the union shall minister temporarily in any Church or congregation without the consent of the parish minister and congregation, or shall be transferred to any new congregation without the consent of the congregation and the Bishop."

Thus, whether the celebrant shall be a priest or a Congregationalist minister depends on local option—conditioned only by unanimous consent. "Any congregation accustomed to an episcopally ordained ministry will not either temporarily or permanently be placed in charge of a non-episcopally ordained minister unless all the communicant members of the congregation have been informed of the suggested appointment, and no one has signified his objection to such an arrangement."

The interval during which these arrangements might be accepted was at Bangalore reduced from fifty years to thirty.

The United Church will seek to be in Communion with the Churches of the Anglican Communion, and its Bishops should attend the Lambeth Conference. And similarly the United Church will seek affiliation with or membership in the World Presbyterian Alliance, the World Union of Congregational Churches and the Ecumenical Methodist Conference, and will send delegates to their Conferences.

It is noted, however, that the union with the Anglican Church in India is restricted to the portion of that Church in South India for certain reasons unspecified, but considered to be convincing.

The Resolutions accepted at Bangalore in 1928 were subsequently revised, and a new and final Report so far as the Joint Committee is concerned was unanim-

ously accepted at Madras in March 1929. In issuing this Report the Joint Committee completes its labours.

With regard to the various ministries, the United Church is to avoid encouraging licence on the one hand or unchristian rigidity on the other.

"The complete spiritual unity within the Church in South India which is the aim of the uniting Churches will not be attained till all the members of the United Church are willing and wishful to receive Communion equally in all of its Churches, and it is the resolve of the uniting Churches to do all in their power to that end.

"If during this process difficulties and anomalies arise, the United Church will be careful not to allow any over-riding of conscience by Church authorities or by majorities; nor will it in its administrative acts knowingly transgress the long-established traditions of any of the uniting Churches."

But "they believe that these ends can rightly be attained not by the framing of detailed regulations, but by assurances given and received in a spirit of mutual confidence and love."

Of exceptional importance is the following statement:

"The uniting Churches agree that it is their intention and expectation that eventually every minister exercising a permanent ministry in the United Church will be an episcopally ordained minister.

"For the thirty years succeeding the inauguration of the union, the ministers of any Church whose missions have founded the originally separate parts of the United Church may be received as ministers of the United Church, if they are willing to give the same

assent to the Basis of Union and the same promise to accept the Constitution of the United Church as will be required from persons about to be ordained or employed for the first time in that Church. After this period of thirty years, the United Church will consider and decide the question of such exceptions to the general principle of an episcopally ordained ministry."

This last claim should be carefully compared with the statement of 1926, that "at the close of that period no one will minister in the Church unless he has received regular Episcopal ordination" (Report of the Sixth Meeting, par. 10).

This final Report of the Joint Committee includes a proposal of which there is no trace in the previous issues.

"It is proposed that the Church of India . . . should divide itself into two Provinces in order to allow the Southern Province, consisting of the Dioceses of Madras, Tinnevelly, Travancore and Dornakal . . . to form with the South India United Church and the Wesleyan Church in South India an autonomous United Church in South India . . . the absence of an organic union with the Northern Province being accepted temporarily for the sake of unity, on the clear understanding that the United Church of the South will wish for and will endeavour to promote a similar union in the North, and on the conclusion of such a union will seek itself to be united to the Northern Church in an All-India United Church."

With regard to Confirmation the following Resolution is proposed:

"Until the Synod of the Church shall frame general

rules with regard to full or communicant membership, either the rite of Confirmation administered by a Bishop of the Church, or such a service of admission to full membership as was in use in the South India United Church before the union, or such a service for the recognition of new members as was in use in the Wesleyan Church in South India before the union, shall be employed in admitting persons to full or communicant membership of the United Church, and persons so admitted shall be recognised as communicant throughout the whole Church.

" It should be made clear that while the governing bodies in India of the three Churches have given their general approval to the basal principles on which union is being sought, and (at least by receiving the *ad interim* reports of the Joint Committee and asking them to continue their discussions and to prepare a complete scheme) to the leading features of the whole scheme, they have not yet officially accepted any part of it, and the scheme as a completed whole is only now presented to them." [1]

Writing in the *Calcutta Diocesan Record* for May 1929, the Bishop of Madras dwells on the difficulty in negotiations where one Church holds what he describes as " a rigid historic view of the ministry," a Church which cannot conscientiously admit the possibility of different methods of commissioning ministers in one Church. On the other hand, " to ask as a condition of union that all non-episcopally ordained ministers should repudiate their ordination and seek re-ordination is to ask what no conscientious man could do who is conscious of the manifest Grace

[1] *Madras Report*, Preface, p. vii.

of God following his previous ministry." "And so in 1928 the General Council at Calcutta unanimously accepted all the existing ministers as part of the ministry of the Church after union, provided that care were taken that their ministrations should not be imposed on persons accustomed to an episcopally ordained ministry. That condition has, after various attempts to formulate it properly, been accepted in 1929 in the form of a pledge given and received in mutual trust." [1]

The Bishop of Madras points out the wholly different outlook and presuppositions of the Episcopal and the non-Episcopal Communions. "It should be remembered that the phrase 'to be in communion with' a Church is peculiar in its restricted sense to Episcopal Churches, and that while there is practically no refusal of Communion to pious people in any of the 'free' Churches, the formal negotiations which take place between (say) an Anglican and an Orthodox Church have no place in their scheme of things." He therefore claims that they face the facts as they are in India.

These are the main features of the South India Scheme and the principal remarks of Indian Bishops upon it.

[1] *Calcutta Diocesan Record*, May 1929, pp. 30–31.

CHAPTER II

CRITICISMS ON THE SCHEME

An attempt has been made in the previous chapter to give some description of the principal features of the South India Reunion Scheme.

It was, of course, to be expected, indeed it was most necessary, that proposals of this kind should be subjected to careful criticism. Some account of these criticisms by well-known writers may next occupy our attention.

1. The difficulty which this South India Scheme presents was admirably drawn out by Canon Quick in an article in the *Constructive Quarterly*.[1] The difficulty is that it finds no room for Anglo-Catholics, or indeed for any body who still adheres to the belief that Bishops who have received their office by succession from the Apostles are the necessary ministers of ordination.

His criticism was that "Unfortunately these proposals, though they do in a sense secure continuity of Episcopal orders in the reunited Church, nevertheless violate inevitably what Anglo-Catholics declare to be a vital principle of their position." This criticism is all the more important because Canon Quick said that he did not write as a convinced Anglo-Catholic. But he realised that in the Anglo-Catholic belief the Church is not only the trustee of certain Sacraments, but has itself a radically sacramental nature. Now

[1] March 1921.

the essence of a sacrament is the communication of a spiritual reality through an appointed outward sign which is at once its vehicle and its pledge. The Catholic, believing that the Church is in its essential constitution a sacrament, believes also that in the Church an outward union of organisation has from the beginning been divinely appointed as the means and pledge of the Church's spiritual life and growth. That outward union of organisation the Catholic finds in the due maintenance of the Episcopal succession. The Catholic does not assert that grace is not on occasion given and received extra-sacramentally. He does not desire to question the spiritual effectiveness of non-Episcopal ministrations. But he cannot acknowledge them as possessing the characteristics and authority of the Sacramental Institution of the historic Church. He cannot recognise as priests of the Sacramental Church ministries which, however manifestly blessed by the Spirit, are not received through the appointed sacramental method. He cannot admit this because to do so would stultify his belief about the Church's nature.

2. It is appropriate at this point to bear in mind some observations made at the Jerusalem Conference of 1928. The Conference was not commissioned to deal with the principles of ordination, or with the conflicting types of Christian ministries. But there was one impressive passage in its voluminous eight-volume Report where the present Archbishop of York (Dr. Temple) threw out valuable suggestions on the alternative between reunions of an interdenominational and of an international kind, expressing his decided preference for the latter.

"It has been asked if it would not be well to unite the Christian bodies in China or India and so set up a Chinese or an Indian Church which would be Churches of Christ free from the trammels of Europe. Any opinions I may hold are purely personal, but I would ask you if one of the functions of the Church is not an attempt to bridge over those things which separate men. Certainly the ideal is a United Church of India or of China which is in full communion with the Church elsewhere. About that I imagine we are all agreed. But if—I say, *if* we should have to choose between inter-denominational and international unity, would it be better to have a United Church of India, or of China, which was not international, or a number of denominations in India or in China every one of them international? I think that if the choice ever had to be made it would be far better that there should be many denominations all international than one local Church that was not international. I trust that choice may not have to be made. I trust that unity, both inter-denominational and international, may be attainable. I only urge that, if such a choice has to be made, the international fellowships are the most important." [1]

3. Writing on the Jerusalem Conference and Christian Unity in the Journal called *The Church Overseas*, which is an Anglican Review of Missionary Thought and Work, Canon Raven inquired,[2] Can we, while loyal to our own Church, welcome to office in it for their lifetimes those whose commission is at least irregular? The South Indian Scheme is virtually the

[1] *Report of the Jerusalem Meeting*, Vol. III. p. 161.
[2] January 1929, p. 18.

proposal of a parallel ministry in which Anglican congregations shall be served only by those episcopally ordained. "To recognise the ministry of those not episcopally ordained must necessarily raise questions as to the Catholicity of our own Church, and may put obstacles in the way of closer union with the Eastern Orthodox and with Rome." The writer is of opinion that "such concession could not impair the Apostolic Succession of the new ministry when finally constituted, for after the fixed date all ordinations will be episcopal." Two criticisms must be interpolated here. One is that, according to the South Indian Scheme, "after the period of thirty years the Church will consider and decide the question of such exceptions to the general principle of an episcopally ordained ministry." [1] That proviso clearly contemplates a further element of insecurity. The other criticism is that if the irregularity were to be terminated, the fact that the Church authorised men who were not priests to consecrate the Eucharist would still remain. And this fact involves a rejection of the traditional Catholic belief that none may celebrate except one episcopally ordained. We entirely agree with Canon Raven that if this thing is wrong, then no future advantage to be gained by it can justify us in accepting it.[2]

4. To these remarks should be added some admirable criticisms by Canon Quick in a subsequent number of *The Church Overseas*.[3]

"It is, I cannot help thinking, true that some, perhaps many, of the Western representatives, both at Lausanne and at Jerusalem, had but little purpose or

[1] *Bangalore Report*, p. 6. [2] *The Church Overseas*, p. 18.
[3] April 1929, p. 106.

desire for anything which a sacramental Catholicism could recognise as reunion at all. The problem seemed to them simple. Let all the Churches 'recognise' each other. Let us all join with one another in acts of inter-communion, whenever by conference or common work our feelings of comradeship are stirred, and then let us wait and see whether out of this looser association any more definitely organised reunion will grow. Such an approach to reunion definitely excludes the very principle of Catholic order, and it is therefore justly called pan-Protestant. The Catholic means by reunion, union in some definite form of outward order, and it must seem to him in the highest degree illogical to propose as means towards this end a line of action which seems constantly to imply that outward order is not a matter of importance."

5. The problem of uniting Presbyterian and Episcopal ministries within the same Church is discussed by Professor Cuthbert Turner in a most conciliatory article on Lausanne and Bangalore contributed to *Theology* for May. He is, of course, concerned with the recommendations suggested at Bangalore, and not with the revised recommendations at Madras, for the latter were not published at the time he was writing. But his reflections are substantially applicable to both. The view that reunion among Protestants is a preliminary towards reunion on a wider scale does not commend itself to his mind. He "cannot but believe that a reunion of all Christians other than Roman Catholics might be worse than no reunion at all; for a dualistic Christianity is in some ways further removed from unity than a pluralistic." In his opinion it is a relief that the Conference at Lausanne showed little

tendency in the exclusively Protestant direction. Professor Turner thankfully recognises the importance of the proviso that, from the moment of union, Episcopal ordination will be the rule in the United Church. But he is compelled to add that "the acceptance of Episcopal ordination, though it is the big thing and the main thing, does not of itself solve quite the whole problem of Episcopacy for the United Church." Each side, he thinks, feels the need of being reassured. Those who are prepared to accept Episcopacy wish to guard themselves from being taken to accept any doctrine about the Episcopate as a necessary corollary of their acceptance of it in practice. Professor Turner admits that this is reasonable under the circumstances. For since Anglicans themselves have complete liberty of interpretation in this matter, it is obvious that the same liberty of interpretation cannot be denied to those who unite with them. "We do not want to impose on the United Church our own interpretation of Episcopacy; but we have a right to claim, and we must be understood quite definitely to claim, that our own interpretation is not to be excluded." For those of us who adhere to the Catholic tradition, great issues are at stake in the answer that the South Indian Commission will give. And if we are asked why we are so unbending when certain issues are raised, Professor Turner answers that it is "because we profoundly believe that only through the Visible Society with its framework of permanent organisation and unchanging tradition have we any sure guarantee for the element of continuity in a world of change." "We believe that throughout the present age, body and spirit are indissolubly one, and that under material sacraments,

ministered by His commissioned apostles and their successors, His unchanging grace comes to His people still."

The strongest point in Professor Turner's paper is perhaps his insistence that Catholic-minded adherents of the English Church have the right to require, and do require, that the Catholic belief about the ministry, which has always hitherto been included within that Church, shall not be excluded by official action.

This argument is, we are convinced, unanswerable. The Anglican formularies may be said to be decidedly in harmony with it. The Article XIX which speaks of the Sacraments being "duly ministered according to Christ's ordinance in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same" is altogether ambiguous. It refrains from defining what those things are which are requisite and necessary to the due ministration of Christ's ordinance. This ambiguity is anything rather than accidental: it is plainly and unmistakably deliberate. It is designed to be inclusive of various ideas. And as a matter of fact it has had precisely that effect. The English Church has included at least two different schools of interpretation with regard to the essentials required for celebrating the Eucharist. One school has held that an episcopally ordained minister, in other words, a priest, is indispensable for the due ministration of Christ's ordinance. Another school has held that Episcopal ordination is not indispensable. Both schools alike have believed themselves justified by the Anglican formularies. Both Evangelical and Anglo-Catholic convictions are thought to be covered by this aforesaid ambiguity of expression. It was always possible, facing the language of Article

XIX, to say that officially the English Church excluded neither.

Now, if Episcopal and non-Episcopal ministries were granted for a time equal authority to celebrate the Eucharist within the same community, the Church which authorised it would officially and dogmatically have committed itself to the Protestant theory as against the Catholic. It would reverse the inclusive principle to which the Church of England has adhered ever since the Reformation, and replace it by an exclusive principle in favour of the Evangelical. What the effect would be on the whole of the Catholic-minded school within the English Church is a very serious consideration. For the interpretation of the Anglican retention of the Episcopate ministry which has made their adherence possible would then be practically officially refuted. No one who values the coherence of the Church of England will think lightly of the prospects which this suggests. It is a most urgent and critical statement which Professor Turner makes when he insists that Anglo-Catholics have a right to claim, and must be quite definitely understood to claim, that no reversal of the Church's principles should take place by which the Catholic interpretation would be excluded.

6. Bishop Gore, writing in the journal *The Church Overseas* in July 1929 his reflections on the previous article by Canon Raven, writing also " on the assumption that Anglicanism still stands for the religion of the ancient and undivided Church, viz. the combination of the Catholic heritage of Creed, Orders and Sacraments with the primitive appeal to Scripture as the testing ground of doctrine and the ancient liberty

of provincial or national Churches in matters of discipline and ceremonial," said:

"Examining, then, the Bangalore proposals from this point of view, there are three details which must be pronounced so inconsistent with Catholic principles that their acceptance by the English Convocations, or the canonical authorities of the different Anglican Churches (I say 'by the canonical authorities' of these Churches, not by the Lambeth Conference; for the Lambeth Conference is purely a consultative body and has no authority over anyone, however often it is spoken of as if it had), would make it surely impossible for Catholic-minded persons to retain their position in these churches. The three points I refer to are these:

"(1) During the 'interim period' it is contemplated as *possible* that an (hitherto) Anglican congregation should be put in charge of a non-episcopally ordained minister. In the proposals of the General Council of the Church of England in India this possibility was carefully excluded. But their provision was not accepted at Bangalore. The provision by which the Bangalore conference proposed to restrict this possibility (which it nevertheless admitted) need not here be considered, for we are informed that it pleased neither party at Madras, and what exactly was substituted for it is not yet in evidence. The author of the article in the *Bombay Diocesan Magazine*, referred to above, tells us that it comes 'nearer (than the Bangalore proposal) to what the general council (*i.e.* the Indian Anglican council) were asking for.' But it appears to depend not on the 'framing of detailed regulations' but an 'assurance given in a spirit of mutual confidence and love.' But without being at

all cynical we are bound to recognise—seeing that the South Indian terms will assuredly form a precedent for similar agreements in Persia, China, Japan and Africa—that nothing short of definite regulations will avail. The principle of the Apostolic Succession must be strictly recognised *in practice* as in the preface to the Anglican ordination services. The impulses of a misguided generosity, whether in Church or State, require at certain points the restriction of definite law. This is what is meant by the requirement of validity whether in respect of the administration of the sacraments or of the marriage law. Otherwise the fabric of principle, as we know too well, collapses. It is obvious also that the same restrictions must apply to visitors or incomers from the 'home base' after the beginning of the 'interim period' as apply to those already on the spot. The specification of restrictions or limitations is disagreeable, but, if we are to face the contemplated situation in a spirit of realism, they are inevitable. This consideration requires stating.

"(2) The point of view expressed throughout the Bangalore Report is that of 'the full mutual recognition of the ministries of the United Church.' Now we can thankfully recognise how abundantly 'the fruit of the Spirit' and His activity have been apparent in non-Episcopal communions and in their ministries —not least among the Friends, who have repudiated all forms of sacramental ordinances; and we can cordially rejoice to recognise that 'God is not tied to His Sacraments,' and can give His gifts how and when He pleases. That He should have worked abundantly with His grace beyond the formal limits of Catholic law becomes much more intelligible when we consider

how widely separation from the Church has been due in very great measure to the Church's own faults and failures. Thus we do not desire to ask of any member of a non-Episcopal communion, minister or layman, any expression of doubt as to the reality of the spiritual gifts which he knows or believes himself to have received. But if reunion is to be based on any principle, or to have any permanence, it must surely involve a recognition of something faulty in the Protestant Reformation which has led to the deplorable condition of division in which we stand (for instance) in America or Great Britain; and to the weakness or failure of Protestantism in so many parts of Europe. There must have been something wrong in the principle of the Reformation to account for such results. If there is to be in the future a reunited Church, some effective provision must be found against normal human disruptiveness. Is there any such provision to be found except in the root principle of the Apostolic Succession? At least we must ask of hitherto non-Episcopal Protestants that they should recognise that it has been the constant belief of Catholics that the threefold ministry is the only valid ministry of the Church, which has descended in orderly and legitimate succession from the apostles, and that its recovery, where it has been lost, is the necessary condition of union. Thus it cannot be asked of Anglicans that they should confess that there is no essential difference between one ministry and another. To do so is to stultify 'the Anglican settlement.' For what has held the Anglican communion together is the acceptance *in practice* of the requirement laid down in the preface to our ordination services—that 'no man shall be

accounted or taken to be a lawful bishop, priest, or deacon in the Church of England, or suffered to execute any of the said functions, except he be called, tried, examined, and admitted thereto, according to the form hereafter following, or hath had formerly episcopal consecration or ordination.' Acceptance of no theory is here asked for, only acceptance of a fact —that so the Church has ordained. Nor is any other standard of valid ordination now proposed. Some 'High Church' Presbyterians have in the past held the theory that there was always latent in the Presbyterate the right to ordain, and that the Apostolic Succession could be carried on, and has been carried on, in the strictly Presbyterian Church through the presbyters; so that their ordinations are valid, but not the Congregational or Independent ordinations where the authority to minister is supposed to be derived from the congregation. Anyone who studies the late Dr. Lindsay's *History of the Reformation* (Vol. I. pp. 240 ff., 441 ff.) will see how contrary to the fundamental principles of the foreign Reformation was any such idea of a continuous succession through presbyters from the unreformed Church. Calvin as well as Luther repudiated it. And to-day no such claim is made on behalf of Presbyterians and to the exclusion of Congregationalists. What is asked of us now is the acceptance of all ministries indiscriminately as on a fundamentally equal basis. And it is easy to see that this sort of indiscriminate acceptance affords no security at all against future disruption. Any body of persons accepting the Christian faith who choose to separate themselves from existing communions could claim recognition for their ministry. The disruptions

of the past would surely be repeated in the future. Nor is it possible to ask Anglicans to be satisfied with the phrase, 'the historic Episcopate in a constitutional form is the method of Church government which is more likely than any other to promote and preserve the organic unity of the Church' (pp. 4–5, A). This appeal to expediency would no doubt satisfy some Anglicans, but by no means those who see in the Apostolic Succession a matter of principle. We need not ask those with whom it is being sought to bring us into union to affirm more than this; but assuredly we must not be expected to assent to it ourselves.

"I am well aware that there are many people, and some in our own communion, who hold all this doctrine of the Apostolic Succession to be an exploded superstition. But it is to me quite unintelligible how anyone who believes that Christ instituted, or reinstituted, one visible society—one Catholic Church—to be the organ of His action in the world, and the home of salvation in His name, can fail to see that the principle of the succession in the ministry from the Apostles is as essential a part of the Divine plan as the Creed or the Sacraments or the Scriptures; and is, in fact, rooted both in the historical tradition of the Church from the first and in the New Testament itself. This point I have laboured at length elsewhere, and I cannot argue its reasonableness here. But there seems to me to be hardly any subject on which such wild statements are made by persons whom we should all, on other grounds, desire to treat with respect.

"(3) The words 'intention and expectation' (p. 6, ii. 2) are quite inadequate to express the needed agreement that eventually, after the 'interim period,' all

the ministers of the word and sacraments in the United Church are to be episcopally ordained. The agreement should be unequivocally expressed as the basis of reunion, and not as an ' intention and expectation ' only. Moreover, the clause, ' After the period of thirty years the Church will consider or decide the question of such exceptions to the general principle of an episcopally ordained ministry,' opens the door to a future arrangement by which non-episcopally ordained men, who shall, none the less, be recognised as on the same level as ministers of the Word and Sacraments with the episcopally ordained, should be a permanent feature in the organisation of the Church."

To these criticisms should be appended the report of a Committee of Anglo-Catholics on the proposals at Bangalore and Madras.

The Report is signed by Dr. Gore, Dr. F. E. Brightman, Fr. H. P. Bull, Superior of the Society of S. John the Evangelist, Dr. B. J. Kidd, Warden of Keble College, Prebendary Mackay, vicar of All Saints', Margaret Street, the Rev. G. A. Michell, Principal of S. Stephen's House, Oxford, the Rev. G. L. Prestige, Dr. W. J. Sparrow Simpson, Dr. Will Spens, Master of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, the Rev. Dr. Darwell Stone, Principal of Pusey House, Oxford, Dr. Cuthbert H. Turner, Dean Ireland Professor of Exegesis of Holy Scripture in the University of Oxford.

The Report is as follows:

" A paper of comments on an earlier draft (Bangalore, June 1928) of this Scheme, signed by most of the signatories of the following document, was presented in January 1929, and published in English newspapers in April. It will be observed that we are now dealing

with the Scheme in the final form prepared for presentation to the governing bodies concerned.

" 1. We wish first of all to express again our deep sympathy with Indian Christians in that, while Europeans have brought them the Gospel, they have brought it by no means as the message of the one Catholic Fellowship, but burdened and obscured by our long-standing divisions and controversies. It is altogether right that they should resent these divisions in which they find themselves involved and which do not much interest them, and that they should resent them more and more as there awakens among them the desire that the Indian Church should stand on its own basis, and not be forced to regard itself as dependent on foreign Churches. We therefore welcome whole-heartedly the efforts being made in South India to terminate some at least of our existing divisions by working out a scheme of reunion which all the uniting bodies can accept without what they regard as a sacrifice of principle. Further, inasmuch as the influences under which those Indian Christians whom we are now considering have been brought have been for the most part of a distinctively Protestant character, it is natural that their outlook should be of a like nature, and that they should take no account of the Roman Catholics of India, who remain quite outside their purview. Even the Syrian Christians, who are their near neighbours, and form a very large group, are unfortunately not now included in the negotiations.

" 2. But it is obvious that the whole Anglican Communion must be interested in these negotiations, and is bound to examine them. What is proposed is a union of South Indian Christians, which would leave

the United Church in full communion simultaneously with the Anglican body throughout the world and with a number of Protestant, non-Episcopal bodies. The provision that 'none of the ministers or members of the United Church shall, because of the union, forego any rights with regard to inter-communion and inter-celebration which they possessed before the union,' should also be noted. Thus we are directly concerned in the negotiations. The Anglican Communion is the home of Catholic-minded as well as of Protestant-minded people, and has, largely because this is the case, a special vocation to minister to the cause of general reunion. We are bound, therefore, to examine carefully any proposals for reunion in one direction to see if they contain anything which would render them impossible of acceptance by some considerable body of Anglicans, or anything which would render futile any efforts towards reunion in the other direction. If this is regarded as a draw-back to the free development of the Anglican Communion—as it is—it is a drawback inherent in its professed comprehensiveness. It is, moreover, obvious that though the proposed scheme of union is limited in its scope to a particular district—South India—it would, if approved, become a decisive precedent to be followed in many parts of the world.

"3. While we are conscious that the Madras Committee has made some attempt to meet previous criticism, and that some phrases in the Bangalore Report to which exception has been taken have disappeared from the Madras Report, yet the point of view evidently remains the same. There can, we fear, be no question that certain features remain which Catholic-minded

persons must view with grave anxiety, and some which may be found so inconsistent with their principles that they could not remain in communion with any Church which formally sanctioned them. We desire to call attention to some of the features in the proposed Scheme which in this respect have the most importance.

"4. (*a*) The point of view expressed throughout the Report is that of the full recognition of the different ministries of the United Church. Thus we read: 'That all the other ministers (*i.e.* other than the Bishops) of the uniting Churches in the area of the union shall be acknowledged as ministers of the Word and of the Sacraments in the United Church, each retaining the standing (whether as a minister authorised to celebrate the Holy Communion, or as a deacon or a probationer) which he had before union in his own Church.' And the Bishops are to take responsibility for the different types of ministry and give authorisation to the ministers. Now we gladly recognise that 'the fruit of the Spirit' and His activity have been abundantly apparent in non-Episcopal communions and their ministries—not least among the Friends, who repudiate all sacramental ordinances—and we welcome the principle that 'God is not tied to His Sacraments,' but can give His gifts as and where He will; we recognise also how often separations from the Church have been due in great measure to the Church's own fault. And we do not feel any desire to ask of anyone, minister or layman of a non-Episcopal communion, any expression of doubt as to the reality of the spiritual gifts which he believes himself to have received. But we must ask that they on their part should recognise that it has been the

constant belief of Catholics that an episcopally ordained ministry which has descended in orderly succession from the Apostles is the only legitimate ministry of the Church, and that its recovery, where it has been lost, is the necessary condition of union.

" Such of us as hold this belief cannot conscientiously accept any form of settlement which implies that there is no essential difference between one ministry and another, as if that were agreed upon by both parties and were the basis of union. We therefore think it would be necessary, if due regard is to be shown to a conviction which the Anglican Church has always hitherto respected, that there should be such re-wording of various clauses as should make it evident that our Church is not being asked to commit itself to the principle of the equal validity of all ministries.

" (*b*) It appears to us also that the possibility of holding in the Church of England the belief that an episcopally ordained ministry is essential would be definitely prejudiced if the Church of England were in full communion with a Church being, as is proposed, in full communion also with non-Episcopal Churches. It should be made clear that, even in the proposed ' United Church,' so long as differently ordained ministries subsist side by side, union in the full sense would not have been attained. There would still be two different classes of ministers ministering side by side to different congregations; and they would obtain no fresh status in communions outside the area covered by the Scheme.

" (*c*) When once the union is formed, it is proposed that all henceforth who are to be ordained to the ministry of the Church are to be ordained by Bishops.

After a time, therefore, all will have been so ordained. But during an interval, reckoned at thirty years, a large number of those who are to be fully recognised as ministers of the Word and Sacraments will have received no Episcopal ordination, and during that period at least it will be possible for them to be admitted to the pastoral charge of (hitherto) Anglican congregations if it should not appear that this arrangement 'would offend the conscientious convictions of any persons directly concerned.' (It is added, 'or . . . would hinder the development of complete unity within the Church or imperil its subsequent progress towards union with other Churches.' It is plain that these two latter conditions might operate in more than one direction.) It will be remembered that the tradition among the Indian Christians of our communion would not in all cases have led them to resent such a suggestion. On the other hand, the General Council of the Church of England in India carefully excluded this very contingency. They asked for 'a proviso that no non-episcopally ordained minister shall either temporarily or permanently be placed in charge of a congregation accustomed to an episcopally ordained minister' (with a corresponding proviso on the other side). It is, then, in our judgment essential that the restriction contemplated by the General Council should be recognised unconditionally; if this is not done, the Anglican position would be compromised.

"(*d*) We consider that the words 'intention and expectation' do not adequately express a definite agreement that eventually all the ministers of the Word and Sacraments in the United Church are to be episcopally ordained. This agreement should be unequivocally expressed as the basis of union, and

not as an 'intention and expectation' only. Further, the clause concerning 'the ministers of any Church whose missions have founded the originally separate parts of the United Church' to the effect that 'after this period of thirty years, the United Church will consider and decide the question of such exceptions to the general principle of an episcopally ordained minister,' seems to us inconsistent with such an agreement as to the future, and should be omitted.

"What has enabled the Anglican Communion to hold together in the past is the rule that 'no man shall be accounted or taken to be a lawful bishop, priest or deacon in the Church of England, or suffered to execute any of the said functions, except he be called, tried, examined and admitted thereunto according to the form hereafter following (*i.e.* in the Ordinal in the Book of Common Prayer of the Church of England), or hath had formerly episcopal consecration or ordination.' Its power of holding together in the future depends on the observance of this rule. It is equally true that its prospect of restoring inter-communion with, for instance, the Orthodox and Old Catholic Churches depends on the same condition.

"5. In the proposed Scheme it is left entirely open whether in the United Church Confirmation will be eventually required. Confirmation is equated with the services of admission to full membership or recognition of new members which have been in use in the existing South Indian United Church or among the Wesleyans, and indiscriminate freedom for communion is accorded to unconfirmed persons. The rule of the English Church definitely requires Confirmation (or the desire for Confirmation) as the preliminary to communion; and we do not believe that the Church

has any right to treat as indifferent an Apostolic ordinance which has been constantly believed to be the completion of Baptism and the Sacramental means for the conveyance of the sevenfold Gift of the Holy Spirit, and therefore a necessary and indispensable element in the life of the Church.

" 6. The matters treated of above seem to us to be of supreme importance. There are others which require serious attention, but can wait till a later stage. At present we have thought it right to speak only of matters which seem to us to concern the essence of the Catholic tradition.

" 7. In conclusion, we desire to repeat that it is most distasteful to us to suggest objections to any scheme which has reunion for its object. But it is obvious that we cannot refrain from regarding every local scheme in the light of its bearing on the whole field, or from asking the question whether a particular method of healing one existing schism may not result in producing another. Studying carefully the proposed Scheme as a whole, we find it necessary to ask whether there is among those proposing to unite a degree of fundamental agreement as to the nature of the Church, the ministry, and the Sacraments sufficient to form a basis for such a union as would satisfy the requirements of the standards to which we have hitherto been pledged; and since we consider that this question is one which can receive a satisfactory answer only from persons of responsible judgment who are familiar with the conditions on the spot, we should welcome a full and careful pronouncement about it by the General Council of the Church of England in India."

CHAPTER III

SOME INDIAN OPINIONS

I

If a reasonable estimate is to be formed of the South India Reunion proposals, it is essential to have as far as possible all the facts before us. It is not enough to have the criticism of residents in England. It is necessary to realise how the matter appears in the opinion of those who know Indian Christianity from within.

A distinguished advocate for the Indian Scheme has appeared in the person of Dr. Palmer, former Bishop of Bombay. His advocacy has taken the form of an elaborate and careful reply to the criticism published by a committee of Anglo-Catholics. It is, therefore, most desirable that this reply should be studied. In a letter to *The Church Times*,[1] Bishop Palmer wrote at considerable length in the following terms:

"Most of your readers will, I hope, feel a wish to think for themselves about the proposals for Chuch union in Southern India, and in order to do so will want to know what may be said on both sides of the question. You have now published two statements on this subject, by Bishop Gore and a Committee of Anglo-Catholic experts. I ask you to publish some observations on these statements by me, not only for the information of your readers, but because the Anglo-Catholic experts did not ask me (though I was in London when they

[1] Sept. 20, 1929.

were sitting) to explain the proposals; and if they had it might have made some difference to their statements.

"A document can only be understood in its setting. What then is the purpose of this statement of Bishop Gore's Committee? The earlier statement contained the sentence: 'We have been asked to supply an answer to the question, What is the *minimum requirement* which, in this particular case, Catholic-minded persons ought, as we think, to make as a condition of assenting to the union?' Now the only persons who will be asked to assent to the union are members of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon, or of the South India United Church, or Wesleyans. The conclusion is obvious, that the persons who sought the advice of Bishop Gore and his Committee are members of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon, who will have to vote either in the Episcopal Synod or the General Council next February upon these proposals. The answer given by the Anglo-Catholic experts is 'Demand these five points, and some others (unnamed) later, and say that you will secede if you don't get them accepted.'

"First, let us examine the five points in our scheme with which Bishop Gore's Committee finds fault. It is impossible to do this with brevity; and if you are unable to find room for the whole of this letter in one issue, I venture to ask that, as the points are discontinuous, you should divide it into two.

"(1) The wording of the scheme seems to these critics to imply the equal validity of all ministries (4 (*a*) of their statement). The scheme nowhere says this. The Anglican representatives stated their views on the matter at Trichinopoly in 1926, and their views were printed as an appendix of the report of that

meeting. The S.I.U.C. and Wesleyan representatives declared that they did not accept our views, but we never withdrew them. All that has since been agreed has been agreed with knowledge of this difference of opinion.

" In the Basis of Union it is laid down that ' continuity with the historic Episcopate shall both initially and thereafter be effectively maintained,' ' and every ordination of presbyters shall be performed by the laying-on of hands of the Bishop and presbyters, and all consecrations of Bishops shall be performed by Bishops, not less than three taking part in each consecration ' (Section III, Basis of Union, B 3 and 4). Deacons will also be ordained by the Bishops (Section VII, Part I, E 2). This is the United Church's own line of action about the ministry. That Church will allow members and ministers to hold and teach ' different interpretations of the fact of the historic Episcopate.' It will also include persons who think that only by such consecrations and ordinations can the ministry of the Church be rightly constituted, and others who think that any section of the Church at any time has a right to lay down how its ministers shall be made.

" These latter persons can agree (and in the Scheme have agreed) to what we call the historic method of making ministers, because it does not matter to them how they are made so long as it is done according to the existing rules of the Church concerned, and because they know that it makes a vast difference to us. Thus, with their consent, the Church will stand (by its actions) for the historic ministry; but we do not ask them to say, what we know they do not believe, that this is ' the only legitimate ministry of the Church.'

"Here, as elsewhere, our programme of union is, when we have found a sufficient basis of agreement (as here in the adoption of the traditional ministries and rules of ordination), to leave to our successors, who will not have behind them lives scarred by controversy, the business of finding agreement on other points on which we cannot reach any. We need unity in order to complete our agreements about truth.

"(2) Our critics' second point (their 4 *e*) is unintelligible to me. 'The possibility of holding in the Church of England the belief that an episcopally ordained ministry is essential would be definitely prejudiced if the Church of England were in full communion with a Church being, as is proposed, in full communion also with non-Episcopal Churches.' It is possible that what would actually happen ought not to be described as 'full communion.' Let us consider things instead of words. It would be asked that the members of the Church of Southern India who are communicants in it should be admitted to communion in the Church of England when in England, just as the Church of Southern India would receive members of the Church of England to communion when they are in South India. It is further asked that persons ordained by the Bishops of the Church of South India should be received (with the licence of the English diocesan Bishop concerned) to minister in the Church of England.

"It is not asked that any minister of the Church of South India not episcopally ordained should do so unless the Church of England is willing to receive his ministrations (Section IV, B 5). It is understood that it would not be willing so long as the Preface to the

English Ordinal is in force. Nothing that I have mentioned so far could have the effect feared by Bishop Gore's Committee. Besides these things, it is desired that priests of the Church of England should not be prohibited from, or censured for, going to South India and ministering in the Church there. They would then become members and ministers of a Church which would be in communion with non-Episcopal Churches. But the Church of England would be in no way responsible for its being so. Would it really become responsible for that fact merely because it did not censure priests who went to work in a Church that had taken that step?

"We all freely admit that it is an anomaly for one Church to be in communion with two Churches that are not in communion the one with the other. This anomaly can only be tolerated if it is conceived of as temporary. But we hope that a change in the minds of people in England and America, who at present do not seriously want union, may one day bring this anomaly to an end. Meanwhile, who do Bishop Gore and his colleagues want? Would they have us propose to our friends in South India that, as a condition of union with us, they should cease to be in communion with those with whom they are now in communion? But this is a condition which we should not dream of accepting for ourselves.

"(3) The third point of Bishop Gore's Committee, its 4 (*c*), is that congregations which up to the union were Anglican, must be prevented by rule from being ministered to by any but episcopally ordained ministers. The General Council of our Church in India wished this rule to be made, and I and other delegates laboured

for a long time to commend it to our friends at Bangalore. Their answer was, that if every member of any congregation wished to be ministered to by a certain minister of the United Church, it would be intolerable tyranny to prevent it.

"A rule was framed at Bangalore following the General Council's wishes with this single exception. At Madras, however, this rule was withdrawn, and it was determined to frame no detailed regulations in this matter, but that the uniting Churches should pledge themselves to one another, that the United Church will not allow the over-riding of conscience by Church authorities or majorities, nor in its administrative acts knowingly transgress the long-established traditions of any of the uniting Churches, nor make arrangements which would hinder the development of complete unity within the Church or imperil its subsequent progress towards union with other Churches. The transfer of a minister who has not received Episcopal ordination to an ex-Anglican congregation would break the second and fourth of these conditions, and usually the first. It will not, therefore, be done. It only remains to ask English Churchmen, in view of the recent history of their Church, whether a written rule is so strong a safeguard that they would really prefer it to an honourable agreement to be kept 'in a spirit of mutual confidence and love.' Thus understood, this is a question of method, not of principle.

"(4) Our Anglo-Catholic critics, in their 4 (*d*), find fault with two provisions of Section IV, B 6. The first of these is as follows:—'The uniting Churches agree that it is their intention and expectation that

eventually every minister exercising a permanent ministry in the United Church will be an episcopally ordained minister.' These words, say the Anglo-Catholic experts, do not adequately express a definite agreement to that effect. We choose them because they express all that can be said by one generation. We cannot bind our unborn successors. They will have (whatever we say) the power to settle the affairs of their own generations. If they should depart from our intentions, those words make quite clear what they will be doing. To say more would be either pretending to control our successors' actions (which we cannot) or, if the Church becomes possessed of property, attaching financial loss to any departure that they may make from our intentions. We desired to do neither of these things, as both would be ineffective and neither creditable.

" Our critics also object to the statement, with which the subsection ends, ' After this period of thirty years the United Church will consider and decide the question of such exceptions to the general principle of an episcopally ordained ministry ' ; the exception being the willingness to receive new non-episcopally ordained missionaries from the Missions which founded parts of the uniting Churches on the same terms as the missionaries and ministers in South India at the date of union are to be received as ministers. The objection is due to the same sort of misunderstanding. The United Church will be able to decide this and other questions of its own right—it waives that right for thirty years in favour of an arrangement incorporated in the terms of union. But it cannot waive the right of legislation (more particularly on exceptions) for ever. The

people of the time alone can judge whether such an exceptional arrangement will be still necessary or will have ceased to be justifiable.

" These two objections amount to this, that we have not secured the observance of the historical rules of ministry in the future. My reply is that we have done so, as far as that is possible to any one generation; and we have stated with unusual accuracy and honesty the exact limits of our power to secure the future.

" The last paragraph of the Committee's 4 (*d*) is devoted to declaring that the ' holding together ' of the Anglican Communion and the ' prospect of restoring intercommunion with Orthodox and Old Catholics ' are endangered by the Scheme. These are fears; our Scheme is built on hope—on the hope that if we do what is right in the sight of God, He will look after the consequences.

" I will try to explain why I, as a Catholic, think that our Scheme (with regard to ministries) is right in the sight of God. In this particular explanation I cannot claim to speak for anyone else but myself, because I have no opportunity of submitting it to my colleagues in India.

" I believe that there are two manifestations of God's Will of which we have to take account. The first is His Will about the manner of constituting the standing pastoral ministry of the Church—bishops, priests, and deacons. The Church came to the rules about those ministries under the Holy Spirit's guidance. The United Church, under the proposed Scheme, agrees to maintain those rules. The other manifestation of God's Will, of which we must take account, is His actual

use of certain persons not episcopally ordained as ministers of the Word and Sacraments. If we pressed the rules of Episcopal ordination and of the exclusive right of those who are so ordained to celebrate the Lord's Supper to the point of refusing to recognise those exceptions, which God Himself seems to have made, even when they come into the same Church with us, we should not be strengthening the rule of Episcopal ordination, but diminishing its claim on men's consciences. This is an example of a principle which is admitted by all jurists, that respect for a good law can only be maintained by making necessary exceptions where it would be unjust to carry it out. This is the principle of 'equity' in civil law, and of dispensations in ecclesiastical law.

"Apparently, in view of your correspondent, Mr. F. J. Edmond's assertion that, in a church where a minister not episcopally ordained is holding a Communion Service, a visitor will find not 'the Sacred Host,' but 'just a bit of bread, over which a good man has spoken a blessing,' it is necessary to explain further. It ought to be clear that the rule that only a Bishop or a priest may celebrate the Eucharist is not a condition of the validity or efficacy of that Sacrament. Professor Turner, in *Theology* (May 1929, p. 251), expresses his agreement with Tertullian's statement (*de exhortatione castitatis*, 7) that, in circumstances of necessity and absence of the proper ministers, a layman may celebrate the Eucharist, just as in the same circumstances he may baptise. If this is true, a minister is not essential to the validity of the Eucharist. The rule which confines the ministration of the Eucharist to Bishops and priests is a rule of order, designed to secure due reverence in the

Sacrament and the unity of the Church. It had no reference to the validity of the Sacrament.

" On this basis, but not on Mr. Edmond's theory, we can understand certain facts of early and recent history: *i.e.* that prophets and probably confessors celebrated the Eucharist in very early days; and that in some at least of the Churches of the Reformation, sacramental grace has been received in the Holy Communion where there was (or is) a lively desire for it and a lively faith in it, in spite of the absence of Episcopal ordination. I, as a Catholic, who have the undeserved privilege of belonging to a part of the Church which has preserved the historic ministry and its rules, am bound by those rules; and I cannot receive Communion from persons not ordained according to them, especially considering that they are ministers of bodies organised as separate Churches, and in inevitable competition with the Church to which I belong. But if that separation is removed by union, I think I am free to recognise as colleagues in the ministry those whom I believe God has so used, and to consent to their continuing to minister to those to whom they have always ministered. In case of necessity, I would myself resort to their ministrations, and allow that others like me might do so. The real trouble against which the Catholic rules were meant to guard is the state of schism, and that would have to come to an end.

" I recognise the difficulties that are involved in this, and I am myself willing to be ordained over again to avoid such difficulties, if this were demanded by any Church with which mine might be proposing to unite. On the other hand, our Free Church friends in South India refuse to take this course, and I understand their

reasons, and can justify (as I have explained above), a course of action on our part which does not make this demand on them.

"(5) Bishop Gore's Committee adds a paragraph on Confirmation. It excludes this subject, however, from those 'which may be found so inconsistent with the principles' of Catholic-minded persons 'that they would not remain in communion with any Church which formally sanctioned them.' The drafting of this paragraph on Confirmation displays a carelessness of accuracy which is regrettable. It states that 'Confirmation is equated with the services of admission to full membership or recognition of new members, which have been in use in the existing South India United Church or among the Wesleyans.' The section of the Constitution referred to (VI, B) is about communicant membership, not about the nature of Confirmation. It begins with the words, 'Until the Synod of the Church shall frame general rules with regard to full or communicant membership,' and then lays down that pending the framing of such rules, either of the three rites or services named will admit to communicant status. Now you do not *equate* things by saying that one effect of each of them is the same. You do not equate the journey from London to Oxford via Princes Risborough with that from London to Oxford via Reading by saying that whichever train you take you will be in time for dinner. The words of the critics imply that I and all the other Anglicans think that there is no difference between Confirmation and a service of admission to full membership in a Presbyterian or Congregationalist Church. The critics know that is not true.

"They also know that the rule which has put Confirmation into the position of the door of access to communion is only an English Church rule, though some seven hundred years old. It was never the rule in the Roman Church; nor is this connection between Confirmation and Communion made in the Orthodox Church, in which Confirmation is administered with Baptism. It has been my practice in all these negotiations to *insist* on nothing which is purely Anglican. The reason of the thing dictates that persons ought to be carefully prepared for their first Communion, or for 'communicant status.' This is why it is not wrong to recognise the other preparations for communicant status beside the preparation which we regularly give at the time of Confirmation.

"Then the critics go on to imply that the United Church (because of its Constitution) will be 'indifferent to Confirmation.' This is another instance of the misunderstanding (or rejection) of our general theory, that the terms of union are a step in a development towards unity: they are not and cannot be a final declaration of completed unity. We Anglicans, who believe all that Bishop Gore's Committee believes about the value of Confirmation and its claims upon Christians, want to see it willingly accepted throughout the Church. We know that if we tried to force it as a term of union upon those who as yet know nothing about it, we should make their acceptance of it difficult and improbable. If we give them time to become familiar with our practice of it, as something available in their own Church, we believe that it is so good a gift of God that they will in time accept it with joy and peace of mind.

"Bishop Gore's Committee has, in its prologue, nobly expressed its sympathy with the difficulties which disunion brings on Indian Christians without fault of theirs. I hope that, on considering what I have written, the Committee may come to see that our plan is nearer to being a true solution of these difficulties than it had supposed. But I would ask everybody interested in this question to consider these points for themselves, quietly and slowly.

"The scheme seems to have come as a shock to many. They must let the effects of shock subside, and then judge with quiet minds, looking, I beseech them, to Jesus and His mind to guide them. In Him I see generosity, courage which amounted to audacity, unconquerable hope in God. I feel Him all the time in agony because His body on earth is no longer one, and He cannot control it as He would. We in India have tried to do our bit to restore to Him that oneness of His body. Tell us how what we are attempting could be done better. We will listen, and weigh what is said. It will have a better chance of being weighed if you will forbear confusing the issue by threatening or prophesying secession and disruption. But if you and your friends will persist in those threats and prophesyings, we can only answer that the Churches in India intend to settle this matter on its merits before God, with the help of His Holy Spirit; and that can only be done by putting out of our minds all other considerations. When that is done, we hope and believe that there will be no true Catholics who will have any reason to secede. As Mr. K. T. Paul, one of the foremost Indian leaders of the S.I.U.C., said publicly at Maloja, it is the firm intention of all Indians

to see that this United Church shall be one in which both Anglo-Catholics and Protestants can be happy. I submit that there is no other kind of unity which is commensurate with the Church of God as we know it."

II

While reunion between an Episcopal community and the "South India United Church" is seriously contemplated, it becomes urgently necessary that the former should be thoroughly acquainted with the principles which the latter maintains. There is in circulation in South India what is called "The Church Member's Manual of the South India United Church." It is the work of a Committee appointed by the General Assembly for the purpose of producing such a Manual. The General Assembly has given its authorisation that the Manual should be published in the Assembly's name—qualifying this authorisation with the proviso that the General Assembly does not make itself responsible for every statement therein. But "the Manual is published in English with the object that it will be translated into various vernaculars for the use of Christians." It is further "hoped that this book will be taught in the catechumen classes, and will find a place in every home."

It is therefore clear that this Manual represents the doctrine of the South India United Church.

The following extracts will illustrate the general tendency of that community:

"Jesus definitely left it to the Church, under the guidance of His Spirit, to make its own laws and to adopt such form of government as it chose. It there-

fore follows that no form has divine authority as compared with all other forms. While it is true that government by Bishops, or Episcopacy, as this form of government is called, has largely predominated in the Church from very early times, it does not follow that this form is more authoritative than another." [1]

" The Church is free to-day to make such laws or to adopt such forms as it may think best, always with the help, the enlightenment and guidance of the indwelling Spirit."

With regard to Sacraments, the Manual teaches that " the very fact that in the New Testament they occupy a place relatively small prevents us from making them fill the whole foreground of our religion. If so many Epistles could be written about greater matters of faith, without any reference to the Sacraments at all, we cannot treat them as supreme in importance. But we equally wish to avoid the other extreme of treating the Sacraments as unimportant. If Jesus considered it necessary to institute the Lord's Supper, who are we that we should consider it a small matter? . . . The case is similar with Baptism, but as Baptism takes place only once, the undervaluing of it is less serious than a neglect of the Supper, which is a recurring and regular mean of grace."

Then, as regards the idea of consecration of the Elements, the Manual teaches that " the words ' this is,' in ' This is My Body,' ' This is My Blood,' have the meaning ' This signifies, has the value of,' and are rightly translated by Dr. Moffatt: ' This means My Body, this means My Blood.' It is a tragic mistake to suppose that by some magic bread and wine are

[1] P. 5.

transformed into the actual flesh and blood of the Lord." [1]

The methods of Celebration "vary greatly within our own Church, and it is good that they should, lest any should attach too great an importance to one outward form. All that is essential is the use of bread and wine, Jesus' words of institution, and the assembling of disciples. Where even with an effort no wine can be obtained, the use of other beverages of the country, such as lime-juice need not be excluded; but it is desirable for the sake of continuity with the first days that, wherever possible, the fruit of the grape should be used. On the other hand, in the circumstances of the world to-day, in which alcohol has become a grave cause of stumbling, it is highly advisable that the wine should be unfermented. It is not absolutely necessary that the words of institution should be pronounced by an ordained minister. But the occasion is so solemn that it can be fittingly presided over only by one who has been duly set apart for the purpose, normally by ordination, by the whole Church in the name of Christ."

Readers will draw their own conclusions as to the effect which reunion with a community maintaining principles of this nature would have on a communion of the ancient Episcopal kind.

III

In order to have all the facts with regard to the attitude of Indian Christians to the scheme for reunion, it is necessary to bear in mind the letter of some forty missionaries of the London Missionary Society working

[1] P. 29.

in South India, and published by them in *The Christian World* in September 1929 as a protest against the Proposals. The writers say:

" We are all of opinion that the ' Proposals ' are too much those of a few leaders rather than the rank and file of the ministry or the Church members. In this connection it should be remembered that although the major points in the ' Proposals ' have been under discussion for the past ten years, they have not, up to the present, been put into the vernaculars, so that only those who can read English have been able to read and study the ' Proposals.' "

They are disturbed by the Proposals concerning the " historic Episcopacy." The protest says :

" The idea that the ceremony of the laying-on of hands of the presbyters at the consecration of the first Bishops chosen from non-Episcopal Churches can in any way continue any living tradition is repugnant to us all.

" We believe that the proposals for maintaining continuity with the ' historic Episcopate ' will not only suggest and perpetuate ideas concerning the ministry which are contrary to our deepest convictions, but will tend—to use a phrase of Archbishop Temple's—' to establish that principle in a position of dominance over the whole field.' (We refer to the principle of ' Apostolic Succession,' and the Archbishop was referring to this principle and the effect of these proposals on that principle.)

" Constitutional Episcopacy is a basis on which some of us are agreed for India, and on which some of us believe we can unite. The qualification of ' constitutional ' by ' historic ' will, for most minds, carry

with it the theory of ' Apostolic Succession,' which we cannot accept."

The Scheme makes invidious distinction between the episcopally ordained and the non-episcopally ordained. It provides " a partial and conditional admission of non-episcopally ordained ministers; while the episcopally ordained ministers, provided they accept the basis of union and Constitution, are unconditionally admitted into the ministry of the United Church."

The protest concludes:

" We believe the proposals for the ministry and for maintaining continuity with the ' historic Episcopate ' put a distinct limitation on the degree of fellowship which will exist between the United Church and the non-Episcopal Churches. There cannot be full and real fellowship if the interchange of ministers is not free, and recognition not mutual. The Scheme as it stands makes it possible for the individual member of the United Church to maintain fellowship with the Churches with which they are now in fellowship before the union, but it does not make it possible for the United Church, as a Church, to maintain a full and real fellowship with the non-Episcopal Churches.

" In the Basis of Union it states: ' They accept the Apostles' Creed, and the Creed commonly called the Nicene, as witnessing to, and safeguarding, that faith which is continuously confirmed in the spiritual experience of the Church of Christ, and as containing a sufficient statement thereof for a basis of union.' A candidate for ordination ' will be required to affirm his sincere belief in the truths witnessed to by the Nicene Creed.'

" We are not all agreed on these clauses which refer to the Creeds. As they stand, some of us have no serious objection to them; but others object to a credal basis, and would prefer a simple ' Confession of Faith.' We think the phrase in which the candidate for ordination is required to affirm his belief in the truths witnessed to by the Nicene Creed is, to say the least, ambiguous. Who is to be the interpreter of those truths? The examining Bishop?

" We all agree that the Scheme invests the Bishops with too much power and authority, and the communicant and the local Church with too little."

All the signatories of this letter belong to the London Missionary Society. It therefore follows that their sympathies are on the Protestant side. And it is this fact which makes their letter one of the most remarkable documents which this controversy has produced. They wrote for the instruction of English Nonconformists, and assure their friends that the notion that Indian missionaries are whole-heartedly in favour of the Scheme of Union as it stands is a misapprehension. These forty missionaries are of opinion that the present proposals will not lead to a satisfactory union. They consider that these proposals represent the views of a few leaders rather than of the generality of ministers or of the members of the South Indian Church. They give us the important information that although these proposals have been under discussion for the last ten years, they have not been translated into languages which an Indian can read, " so that only those who can read English " have been able to study them. This is news, and it is a very serious matter. It is suggestive of an eager endeavour, engineered by a resolute few

over the heads of an uninstructed community, to commit the local congregations to principles which they do not understand.

These forty missionaries strongly object to the proposal that all future Bishops in the contemplated United Church will be consecrated by the laying-on of hands of not less than three Bishops, " and that no presbyters are to take part in this ceremony."

Episcopal consecration is represented as " a ceremony " in which presbyters ought to share. The presbyter should assist in conferring an order which he does not possess. The forty also strongly resent the Archbishop of York's expression which contemplated the establishment of the Episcopal principle in a position of dominance over the whole field. They are, moreover, painfully sensitive that any refusal to receive the Sacrament from ministers not episcopally ordained " tends to perpetuate an invidious distinction in the ministry of the United Church ": an invidious distinction which will last until no more non-episcopally ordained ministers exist. They complain that the recognition measured out to the episcopally ordained and to the others is " anything but equal and mutual."

CHAPTER IV

FURTHER REFLECTIONS

ADVOCATES of the South Indian proposals have recently appealed to the language of the Lambeth Conference of 1920 in support of their Scheme.

The sub-committee on Relation to and Reunion with Non-Episcopal Churches, in its report to the Lambeth Conference of 1920, anticipated the case of a combination of Episcopal and non-Episcopal ministries. Its reflections were as follows:

"Some Provinces of our Communion, while agreeing to unite with a non-Episcopal Communion on the basis of the acceptance of Episcopacy for the future, might be faced with the necessity of providing for the contingency that many ministers who at the time of the union were working in the non-Episcopal Communion, would remain after the union without Episcopal ordination."

On this problem the Committee offered the following suggestions:

> "(*a*) Ministers of both the uniting Communions should be at once recognised as of equal status in all Synods and Councils of the United Church.
>
> "(*b*) The terms of union should not confer on non-episcopally ordained ministers the right to administer the Holy Communion to those congregations which already possess an Episcopal

ministry, but they should include the right to conduct other services and to preach in such churches if licensed thereto by the Bishop." [1]

This recommendation made by its Committee to the Lambeth Conference of 1920 appears to regard the non-Episcopal ministries as possessing an essentially prophetic character. It leaves the distinctively priestly function of consecrating the Eucharist to the episcopally ordained. There was a somewhat similar distinction drawn by several speakers in the Conference at Lausanne. It was frankly admitted by some that the non-Episcopal ministry was essentially prophetic. There can be no doubt that much evidence could be produced confirming this view.

The Bishops of the Lambeth Conference of 1920, in their Appeal to all Christian People, said that they did not call in question for a moment " the spiritual reality of the ministries of those Communions which do not possess the Episcopate. On the contrary, we thankfully acknowledge that these ministries have been manifestly blessed and owned by the Holy Spirit as effective means of grace." [2] But there is nothing in this general acknowledgment, that non-Episcopal ministries are effective means of grace, to imply that such ministries are regarded as equally authorised to celebrate the Sacrament. The Bishops at Lambeth did not commit themselves to anything of the kind. The recommendation of their own Committee definitely disallows the right of non-episcopally ordained ministers to administer the Sacrament to an Episcopal community.

[1] *Report of Lambeth Conference*, 1920, p. 143. [2] P. 135.

Certain Anglican Bishops in 1923 quoted these words, that ministries which do not possess the Episcopate "have been manifestly blessed and owned by the Holy Spirit as effective means of grace," and added, "It seems to us to be in accordance with the Lambeth Appeal to say, as we are prepared to say, that the ministries which we have in view in this Memorandum, ministries which imply a sincere intention to preach Christ's Word and administer the Sacrament as Christ has ordained, and to which authority to do so has been solemnly given by the Church concerned, are real ministries of Christ's Word and Sacraments in the Universal Church."

Now it seems natural to say that this is much stronger than anything the Lambeth Reunion Appeal contains. But the Anglican Bishops who formulated it expressly say that "it seems to us to be in accordance with the Lambeth Appeal." They therefore do not intend to go beyond that Appeal. Moreover, they expressly warn the reader that their Memorandum "cannot be regarded as an official interpretation of the Appeal." And further, they qualify their previous assertion by adding, "yet ministries, even when so regarded, may be in varying degrees irregular or defective." They say also that they regard the rule of Episcopal ordination "as much more than a mere rule of internal discipline" of the Church of England. They refer to their relations with other Episocpal Churches in East and West, and are only prepared to admit that terms of reunion should allow non-Episcopal ministers to conduct services "other than celebrations of the Holy Communion."

It is therefore not in the least surprising that the

Evangelical Free Churches replied that they cordially welcomed the first part of this declaration of 1923, and "noted with regret its succeeding section." It is important to call attention to the manner in which the Anglican Bishops guarded and qualified the statement about certain non-Episcopal ministries being real ministers of Christ's Word and Sacraments. For if that statement is quoted without the qualifying clause it conveys an impression which its authors certainly never intended.

It is of interest here to quote the careful opinion given by Dr. A. E. J. Rawlinson, in the volume called *Foundations*, on the manner in which men of Catholic tendencies are constrained by principle to regard non-Episcopal ministries.

"From a Catholic point of view there need be little or no difficulty in recognising the Protestant pastor as a godly minister of the Word; though it might appear difficult or impossible to recognise him, apart from ordination, as *in the Catholic sense and for Catholics* a qualified minister of Sacraments." [1]

The proposals of the India Committee at Bangalore in 1928 go very far indeed beyond, and are in contradiction to, anything contemplated at Lambeth in 1920.

The Bangalore proposal is that no minister ordained before the union shall minister in any congregation without the consent of the parish minister and congregation. Thus, what the recommendations at Lambeth prohibited is here altered into a permission subject to local consent. That is indeed a widely different principle. The deliberations at Bangalore

[1] P. 401.

made it still more plain by adding that " a congregation accustomed to an episcopally ordained minister will not . . . be placed in charge of a non-episcopally ordained ministry unless all the communicant members of the congregation have been informed . . . and no one has signified his objection." This leaves the decision on Holy Orders to the preferences of each local congregation, which of course implies that there is no essential difference of principle. It fails to realise that no one who is convinced that a priest is indispensable to the Sacrament could acquiesce in any Episcopal congregation consenting to substitute a Congregational minister as celebrant where they formerly had a priest. If the sort of ministry can be rightly left to local option the question arises, What possible right has any congregation to refuse such consent? Refusal can only be really justified on the ground of a sincere belief that there is an insuperable distinction.

The Bangalore proposals as finally revised at Madras in 1929 significantly admitted that complete spiritual unity would not be attained till all the members of the United Church are wishful to receive communion equally in all its Churches. They resolve to do all in their power to promote that end. They promise to over-ride no man's conscience. They will not knowingly transgress the long-established traditions of any of the uniting Churches. But they do not appear to realise that to allow the choice between an Episcopal and a non-Episcopal ministry to depend on the unanimous consent of any congregation does completely over-ride the long-established tradition of Episcopal Churches.

A further feature of these revised proposals is that they believe that their purpose can be rightly attained "not by the framing of detailed regulations, but by assurances given and received in a spirit of mutual confidence and love." It is indeed indispensable, if reunion is to be attained, that there must prevail on every side a spirit of mutual confidence and love. But that spirit, however indispensable, is not an equivalent for definite principles and clear regulations. While there is much that may safely and wisely be left for time to solve, there is a limit to the legitimate application of the maxim *solvitur ambulando*. On fundamental problems, whether sacramental or ministerial, it is essential to know where we are and what we hold. Otherwise we lay in store disconcerting perplexities which are simply due to ambiguous utterances and vague generalities.

There is a further reason for uneasiness in this Madras revision. It is expressly said, in reference to non-Episcopal ministers, presumably coming from Europe or America, that is to say from the Societies which originally founded the Missions in India, that they may be received as ministers of the United South Indian Church during the interval of the thirty years. That was, of course, naturally to be expected. But then comes the difficult regulation that "After this period of thirty years the united Church will consider and decide the question of such exceptions to the general principle of an episcopally ordained ministry." This clause is perplexing. It seems to leave the whole question of invariable Episcopal ordinations open to indeterminable exceptions. That is inexpressibly disconcerting. It leaves uncertain the fundamental

agreement that the entire South India United ministry would be Episcopal. It is also in complete contradiction to the proposal of 1926, that "at the close of that period no one will minister in the Church unless he has received regular Episcopal ordination."

Another matter of grave concern is the view taken in the South India Reunion proposals of the Rite of Confirmation. The proposal is as follows:

"Until the Synod of the Church shall frame general rules with regard to full or communicant membership, either the rite of Confirmation administered by a Bishop of the Church, or such a service of admission to full membership as was in use in the South India United Church before the union, or such a service for the recognition of new members as was in use in the Wesleyan Church in South India before the union, shall be employed in admitting persons to full or communicant membership of the United Church, and persons so admitted shall be recognised as communicants throughout the whole Church."[1]

That is to say, that Confirmation is placed on the same level as a form of admission or a form of recognition. This reduces it to a profession of faith, or a welcome on the part of the congregation. It refuses to regard Confirmation as a distinctive and authorised medium for the communication of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Confirmation regarded in this sense is an entirely different thing from the Apostolic rite of which it is written, "Then laid they their hands on them and they received the Holy Ghost."

This South Indian proposal to make Confirmation an alternative to recognition would inevitably result in

[1] *Scheme of Union*, p. 17.

very strange anomalies. It would apparently be possible that a future Bishop of the South India United Church might administer Confirmation to others while himself remaining unconfirmed.

It is also curious to note that precisely simultaneous with this treatment of Confirmation in India there is a decided movement in Presbyterian Scotland to restore the rite and to assign to it a sacramental value.

There is yet a further proposal in the final Madras Report which is also very disconcerting. It is proposed that the Church of India, that is to say, the Episcopal Church, which is of course in communion with the Church of England, " should divide itself into two Provinces." If this proposed division were merely due to enormous extension of the Episcopate and the better union under Synodical Constitution, it would be, of course, quite natural. But the reason given for this proposal is, " in order to allow the Southern Province, consisting of the Dioceses of Madras, Tinnevelly, Travancore and Dornakal . . . to form with the South India United Church and the Wesleyan Church an autonomous United Church." That is to say, that the Southern Province is to break away from the Northern Province in order to allow the Bishops of South India to unite with the Presbyterians, Congregationalists and Wesleyans. This arrangement is described in the really remarkable words, " the absence of any organic union with the Northern Province being accepted temporarily for the sake of unity." That is to say, for the sake of unity with Presbyterians and Methodists, the Southern Bishops are prepared to break off their unity with the Northern Province of the Indian Church. It is true that the proposers of this

scheme go on to add that this is " on the clear understanding that the United Church of the South will wish for and will endeavour to promote a similar union in the North, and on the conclusion of such a union will seek itself to be united to the Northern Church in an All-India United Church." [1]

This proposal is unprecedented in Christendom. Never before has an Episcopal Province proposed to sever itself from another Episcopal Province, with which it is organically united, in order to unite itself with non-Episcopal communions, offering at the same time to reunite with its original Episcopal colleagues on condition that they shall first consent to follow its example and amalgamate with ministers of various non-Episcopal bodies. The sacrifice of a real unity, which already exists, for the sake of a unity problematical in its nature and precarious in its effectiveness, combined with the purely speculative postponement to futurity of the prospect of recovering the unity thus thrown away, is one of the strangest and most fantastic of modern innovations.

The creators of the scheme assert that this United Church, united by the severance of one Episcopal Province from another in the Indian Church, " will seek to be in full communion with the Churches of the Anglican Communion, and equally to be in such relations of communion and fellowship with other Churches as are now maintained with those Churches by the South India United Church and the Wesleyan Church in South India." " They hope that invitations to the Lambeth Conference may be extended to the Bishops

[1] The explanation given by Bishop Waller, *Church Union in South India*, p. 83, is very far from satisfactory.

of the United Church . . . and that similar affiliation with or membership in the World Presbyterian Alliance, the World Union of Congregational Churches, and the Ecumenical Methodist Conference may be granted to the United Church.

This seems to mean that two separated Episcopal Indian Churches will apply for admission to the Lambeth Conference. They are to be definitely severed from each other. The one is to be in union with Wesleyans and Congregationalists, while the other is not. But although not in communion with each other they will seek both to be part of the Anglican Communion.

There are a number of formidable questions which all this scheme provokes. What will happen to Catholic-minded clergy and laity in the Dioceses of Madras, Tinnevelly, Dornakal, and Travancore? Where will any Catholic community or religious society with Catholic affinities find in South India a spiritual home? Can they acquiesce in a Communion which withdrew from the Indian Episcopate of the North, in order to combine with the non-Episcopate of the South? What attitude will the Indian Episcopate as a whole adopt towards colleagues who propose deliberately to sever connection with them in order to fraternise with those that are without? What place in the Lambeth Conference can be legitimately claimed by Indian Bishops who secede from their brother Bishops in India?

It is, of course, a duty to face the problems and difficulties which a scheme for reunion may involve. No sincere lover of the Church could wish it otherwise. The frankest criticism is indispensable. But the desire

for reunion remains as keen as ever. This is as it ought to be. Yet an eager longing to end divisions may tempt us to a superficial unity, or lead us to underestimate the gravity of conflicting principles, or render us less sensitive to the value of doctrines which are not our own. There is undoubtedly a risk when assemblies are swept by waves of sentiment that the corporate psychology of the many may be inferior to the more deliberate wisdom of the few. There is a real danger of impulse and of impatience which would in too short a space remove the stereotyped divisions of the centuries.

Is it too much to suggest that the real way for lasting unity is that either side should come into closer constitutional and ministerial identity, and that reunion should be regarded as the ultimate consummation of a process, rather than that the method should be reversed? That would, of course, demand much forbearance and self-restraint. But it would avoid confusion and ambiguities, and the attempt to combine the incompatible. None of the difficulties with regard to the Eucharist which the India Scheme creates would arise if reunion is postponed until all ministries have become Episcopal.

CHAPTER V

THEORIES OF THE MINISTRY AT LAUSANNE

IF justice is to be done to the proposals about different types of ministry in South India, it would be advisable to compare and contrast them with the discussion about the Church's ministry in the Conference at Lausanne. The distinction of that discussion was that the various doctrines, so far from being ignored or concealed under external agreement about forms, were full and frankly set forth in all their differences. That method is wise. Indeed it is essential if solid and permanent unity is to be effected. The varieties and sharp contrasts, and even contradictions, are perhaps nowhere else to be found so clearly presented side by side by representative exponents. And therefore, as a help to arrive at right conclusions, this section of the Lausanne discussions deserves to be carefully studied. A summary of the various doctrines will accordingly be here given.[1]

1. The first exponent was Anglican—with all the more important bearing upon our immediate interest because he was an Indian Bishop. The Right Rev. E. J. Palmer, Bishop of Bombay, explained that the difference between the various conceptions of the ministry appears most plainly when we try to answer

[1] See the full account in *Faith and Order:* Proceedings of the World Conference, Lausanne, 1927. Edited by H. N. Bate, Canon of Carlisle.

the question, What happens in ordination? The traditional answer is that Christ through the Bishop commissions and gives authority. The Protestant answer is that in ordination the Church recognises and gives authority.

Dr. Palmer asked whether it is possible that both are true, but that they apply to different types of ministry.

The traditional conception that the Bishop has inherited the authority of the Apostles, no doubt involves the doctrine of Apostolic Succession. Dr. Palmer urged that the whole Christian world at the end of the second century believed the Bishops of certain Sees to be the successors of the Apostles in those places. "Calvin made the most amazing mistake for an able man when he tried to reform the Church by reconstructing it after the pattern of the Apostolic age *minus* the Apostles." The Scriptural principle of the Church's ministry is sending as from Christ. This sending is not recognising a ready-made minister, but commissioning him to be such. Dr. Palmer assured his hearers that his experience in the East led him to realise that "in the East men value institutions for what they mean; in the West for what they effect. There is a vital truth in the Eastern view. To a great extent an institution is what it symbolises. The ordination by the Bishop (to any simple mind) represents ordination by Christ much more naturally than any other method."

Passing to the Protestant conceptions of ordination and ministerial authority, they are mainly two. First, the earlier Presbyterian doctrine that only the ordained had authority to ordain. Secondly, the doctrine of the Independents, that each separate congregation may

make a ministry. In modern movements the Presbyterian and the Congregationalist theories tend to combine. Dr. Palmer was prepared to acknowledge a prophetic ministry of the Word in the Protestant ministry. But this limitation is what his Protestant friends refuse to admit. They claim that their ministry embodies everything that God intended the general ministry of the Church to be. The Church is not the source of the Minister's authority. The source is Christ.

2. After the Anglican exponent came Dr. Scherer, Secretary of the United Lutheran Church in America. He maintained that the Apostles died without leaving, so far as is recorded in the New Testament, any intimation of a succession in the Apostolate, or providing therefor. He recognised that from very early times certain doctrines have been associated with the Episcopate. "One of these, and the chief, is the sacerdotal character of the ministry. From the Apostles onward, the ministry, so it is maintained, is a priesthood." Then comes the doctrine of Apostolic Succession. On these doctrines Dr. Scherer affirmed quite plainly that "if this sacerdotal theory be accepted and consistently carried out, not only is there an end to all discussion about the kind of ministry that is necessary for a united Church, but what is more important to note is that Christ is no longer the sole Mediator between God and man, the universal priesthood of believers is degraded to an inferior position."

With regard to the Episcopate, Dr. Scherer held that the Lutheran Church had never rejected the Episcopate as such, nor has it pronounced in favour of any other particular form. It leaves the question open what

form of ministry the Church shall have. " It is free to choose between the Episcopal, Presbyterial, and Congregational forms, or indeed to choose elements from each of these, and if possible to combine them."

What he desired to know with regard to a conception of Episcopacy was—(1) Will the change involve the acceptance of the sacerdotal theory of the ministry? (2) Will subscription to the necessity of Episcopal ordination be requisite? (3) Must the theory of Apostolic Succession be received?

3. The third speaker was an exponent of the ministerial principles of the Orthodox Greek Church—Dr. Sergius Bulgakow, Professor at the Orthodox Theological Institute, Paris. He declared quite uncompromisingly that " Societies of laymen, devoid of clergy—such as those Protestant Confessions which have lost the Episcopate—possess only one ecclesiastical degree, the order of laymen." Professor Bulgakow affirmed that the priest is above all an offerer of sacrifice. The ministry of the Altar belongs to the priesthood alone. The ministry of the Word, the authority to preach the Gospel, and even the power to baptise are compatible with the status of the laymen. And the Truth is committed to the whole body, to clergy and laity as an integral whole. Only one ministry is withheld entirely from the laity, that of the mysteries—the celebration of the Holy Eucharist and the other Sacraments. No human consent or election can confer this power upon men. It was given by Christ to the Apostles and transmitted by Apostolic Succession.

4. In sharp contrast with this Eastern Church theology, the fourth exponent was Dr. Banninga, of the South India United Church. He laid immense

stress on the subjective side of ministry, the personal response to what the individual believes to be a divine call to minister. "No Church, no Church officer, can make him such. It is a personal matter between him and his Master, and to the young man it is the Master Himself who lays hands on him and bids him go forth in His name to proclaim salvation."

Dr. Banninga admitted that some will say these men are prophets rather than priests in the Church of Christ. Yes, he answers, perhaps they are. But then he thinks that Christ Himself is a prophet rather than a priest.

5. The fifth exponent of ministerial principles represented the Evangelical Church of Bohemian Brethren. Dr. Soucek said that the Apostolic Succession refers to faith, and not to ministry. Any one who preaches the true Gospel is in the Apostolic Succession. Their Church, however, follows the Presbyterian system, believing that to be most in conformity with the Christian religion and the example of the Apostolic Church. Their theory of ordination is that it is the Church investing the minister with her authority.

Facing the problem of a ministry for the United Church, a ministry which would secure universal recognition, Dr. Soucek gave his opinion that "the best solution would be to acknowledge that the question of the form of Church government, and how its ministers should be ordained, is not an essential question of the Christian religion and of the true Church, and that for this reason it might be left to the different Churches, or branches of the United Church, to decide what shall be the form of their organisation and of the calling and ordaining of their ministers."

But he is aware that this solution would not be acceptable to some Churches. "It seems that it is impossible for some Churches to recognise the ministers of other Churches, and that perhaps the solution of the difficulty might be a constitutional Episcopate. I believe—and here I speak personally—that this suggestion need not be *a priori* rejected by non-Episcopal Churches."

For this opinion he gives two reasons. First, that there are in existence Churches which we cannot consider Episcopal in the full sense of that term, but they have bishops. There are Methodist bishops, Lutheran bishops, and also Presbyterian bishops. "There are reformed Churches with the Presbyterian system which have or used to have Superintendents."

Secondly, while he is persuaded that the Presbyterian system answers best to the spirit of Christian religion, he holds that there are no strict and clear instructions of Christ or of the Apostles in the matter of Church government; and therefore the form of Church organisation is not of fundamental importance. Thus, for the sake of the unity of the Church it might be advisable to accept Episcopal ordination as the solution of the difficulty. At least it ought not to be rejected forthwith. Unity cannot be realised without self-denial. The Episcopate might therefore be accepted as a self-denying ordinance. But only with the proviso that if Episcopal ordination were accepted, it must be purely as a question of Church government, and not a question of faith and doctrine.

Dr. Soucek, however, had considerable misgivings about this solution. He cannot accept the principle of Apostolic Succession. And he propounds the following

difficulty "If a non-Episcopal Church should elect and appoint bishops and give them authority to ordain, would the Churches who now find it impossible to recognise the ministers of other Churches recognise those Bishops who have not been ordained or consecrated in the way of Apostolic Succession, or would they demand their submission to a special consecration by a Bishop already consecrated in that way?"

This most significant inquiry raises the question whether a non-Episcopal community can create an Episcopate. If a congregation nominates a Superintendent and assigns to him the title of Bishop, is he Bishop in the same sense as the Episcopate of the ancient Churches? The practical significance of the Apostolic Succession is here made luminously plain. But, says Dr. Soucek, it "can scarcely be expected that non-Episcopal Churches would consent, for the sake of unity, to accept the doctrine of Apostolic Succession or, without accepting it, let their ministers be ordained Bishops by those who are believed to have been consecrated through the Apostolic Succession."

6. The sixth exponent of doctrine concerning ministry was Dr. David Fyffe, Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of England. The functions of the Church are delegated by the people of God to those whom it has chosen.

7. The seventh and last of the selected representatives was Dr. Dibelius, Evangelical-Lutheran, Professor in the University of Heidelberg. He said that the discussion had made them all realise how different were the views which exist regarding the ministry of the Church. He would not venture to propose a formula of compromise which would necessarily be

colourless and would satisfy nobody. "There can be no question of finding a formula on which we might all agree."

Nothing could be more illuminating on the gravity of the existing differences, than the note appended by the Lausanne Reporters to their suggestions about the ministry. The facts required them to place on record the following view formulated by the representatives of the Eastern Church.

"The Orthodox Church, regarding the ministry as instituted in the Church by Christ Himself, and as the body which by a special 'charisma' is the organ through which the Church spreads its means of grace, such as the Sacraments, and believing that the ministry in its threefold form of bishops, presbyters and deacons can only be based on the unbroken Apostolic Succession, regrets that it is unable to come, in regard to the ministry, into some measure of agreement with many of the Churches represented at this Conference; but prays God that He, through His Holy Spirit, will guide to union even in regard to this difficult point of disagreement."

CHAPTER VI

THEORIES IN THE NON-EPISCOPAL COMMUNIONS

IT will generally be found that a distinct conception of the Church and of the Sacraments and of the ministry go together. That would naturally be the case where their significance and mutual relation has been thought out. Where the institutional conception is accepted and the Church is seriously regarded as the Body of Christ, it is realised as the organ of the Invisible Lord, the extension of the Incarnation, the instrument and agency through which He speaks, and acts, and ministers, and absolves, and consecrates, and blesses. That conception of the Church involves a corresponding significance in the Sacrament, and a corresponding function in the ministry.

Conversely, where the individual conception of the Church's nature is accepted, the usual consequence is that the Sacrament becomes less momentous, and the ministry more readily separated from the Sacrament, scarcely conceived as priestly, not necessary to consecration, and viewed as almost entirely prophetic. Where the sacramental nature of the Church as the visible organ of the Invisible Christ is not accepted it often happens that the Sacraments themselves become viewed as purely external and optional, as forms which have been unduly emphasised, dependent for their usefulness on their subjective impressiveness. And similarly, the ministry itself becomes regarded

as a form of organisation which, whatever its utility, has been grossly exaggerated in the Christianity of the centuries.

It is desirable to have before our minds some illustrations of the individualist conception of the Church in the words of its own modern exponents.

An American Congregationalist, Dr. Ladd, says that the question whether acts of ordination, such as laying on of hands, are necessary to constitute one chosen to the pastoral office a true pastor of a Congregational Church has been often and elaborately debated. What is held for certain appears to be first, that the selection by the local Church is the primal and essential element of pastoral ordination, secondly, that the ceremony of ordination, with at least its two essential elements of prayer and imposition of hands, is necessary to a *decent* and *orderly induction* into that office. But in these essential regards we are told that the true Church polity knows no difference between installation and ordination.[1]

But by whom should the ceremony of ordination be performed? The right not only to select but also to ordain belongs to the local Church. If it be performed by a minister he acts as the delegate of the ordaining Church. Opinion seems to differ whether the delegate must be a minister, or whether ordination by a layman is admissible. Some thought this could only be justified in extreme cases. Others, however, held that it was more disorderly for a minister of one particular Church to ordain elders for another Church, than when every Church ordained them for itself. Ordination by the congregation alone has been a recognised, although

[1] Ladd, *Principles of Church Polity*, 1882, pp. 228 ff.

exceptional, practice in American Congregationalism. If lay ordination is now obsolete, we are assured that it is neither uncongregational nor unscriptural.

If the Manual of Congregational principles written by Dr. Dale of Birmingham is a fair exposition of that Communion, we gather that according to those principles the pastor always presides at the Lord's Supper, but only as a matter of propriety, and that an ordained minister is not necessary, and that there is nothing to prevent a Church from celebrating the Sacrament in the absence of its pastor, and there is not a fragment of evidence in the New Testament that the Eucharistic elements require any official consecration.

Now, according to this teaching, the Congregational form of ministry is the outcome of a definite principle, and that principle about the ministry goes with a corresponding principle about the nature of the Sacrament.

An editorial in *The Congregationalist Quarterly* for July 1929 says emphatically that "No ministry, and certainly no ministry gaining its Orders through one channel only, is necessary to the being of a Church. Congregationalists believe that a Church can, at any time, appoint any of its members to perform any function—even that of the ministry of the Word and Sacraments." But he raises a doubt whether Presbyterians would in any circumstances allow a layman to administer the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper—a difference which has important bearing on the problem of union between Presbyterians and Congregationalists.

The theory of the right of the congregation to determine whether it will have any ministry at all, and if so what, and whether by ordination or otherwise, and

whether the layman can lawfully, if invited, in ordinary circumstances, assume the functions of the ministry, has no place among the principles of the historic Church. And as a matter of fact, the theory that official ministerial authority can be given by those who have not received it did not arrive at recognition until after the Reformation.

This has been admirably expressed by Dr. A. E. J. Rawlinson in his book on *Authority and Freedom*.[1]

"The Church becomes conscious of itself as an Apostolic Society, sent from Christ, as Christ was sent from God. Out of that consciousness, and out of the germinal Episcopate of the Twelve and of St. Paul, and perhaps of other 'Apostolic men,' there was developed eventually both the Episcopal hierarchy and also the doctrine of Apostolical Succession—a doctrine which since the Reformation has become controversial, as the result of the abandonment of Episcopacy by some sections of Christendom, but which originally was not controversial at all: it was merely a recognition of the facts—the broad fact of ecclesiastical continuity from Apostolic times, the further fact that the Bishops of later days occupied in relation to the Church within their sphere of jurisdiction the same kind of position which had been occupied in relation to the earliest Christian Church by the Apostles."

Attention should also be called to the further fact, that repudiation of the Episcopal ministry was not made by Christian Communions until the sixteenth century. Moreover, when made it was made reluctantly, apologetically, and not primarily on the basis of a different conception of ministerial ordination.

[1] P. 145.

John Durel, who was himself a minister of the French Church and in Anglican orders, wrote in 1662 a book on the Reformed Church of England, in which he gathered an array of French Protestant opinions about the English Episcopate. Among these are the following. There were many complaints in the ancient Fathers against Bishops who abused their authority, "yet there was none found that did so much as think of abolishing Episcopacy." [1] Accordingly, he warned his contemporaries against rushing from one excess into another, and being transported so far as to accuse the ancient Church, and to separate themselves from communion with it. Another remarked that "if the French Reformed Churches have no Bishops, it is not because they hold Episcopacy to be contrary to the nature of the Gospel, but because necessity hath obliged them to it." [2]

The Presbyterian Principal Lindsay of Glasgow, in his history of the Reformation, makes it perfectly plain that Lutherans did not repudiate the Episcopate as such, nor did they attempt to replace it originally by a non-Episcopal form of ministry. They maintained the priesthood of all believers in the sense of the layman's right of direct approach to God. The clergy differed from the laity simply in the fact that they had been selected to perform certain definite duties. Luther recognised that the priest stands before the altar as the mouthpiece of all the laity. But "though it is true that we are all equally priests, yet we cannot, nor ought we if we could, all minister and teach publicly." [3]

Professor Story, representing Presbyterianism, maintained in the Baird Lectures for 1897 that "It would be a mistake to suppose that the government of the

[1] P. 277. [2] P. 278. [3] I. 443.

Reformed Church of Scotland was settled on a *dogmatic* basis, or in accordance with a preconceived theory of the *jus divinum* of Presbytery. There is, on the contrary, clear evidence that the first Reformers had no dogmatic hatred of Episcopacy or attachment to Presbytery. Among the reforms which the Lords of the Congregation craved in their first petition, abolition of Episcopacy was not included, or even named. The Episcopal function was continued in the appointment of the reformed Superintendents; and the Episcopal order, as an order, was regarded with tolerance, if not with respect. . . ." [1]

"At the same time the expediency of the Episcopal function was too apparent to allow that function to be discarded. One of the first reconstructive acts of the Reformers was, therefore, to perpetuate it, through the appointment of those who were called 'Superintendents'—a name exactly equivalent to that of bishop or overseer; and designating an official who, under reformed conditions, would supply to the Church all that was best in the function of the Celtic Abbot or the Catholic Bishop." [2]

The reformers were not hampered in this by any theory either for or against the episcopal order. They did not believe it was of divine institution.

Dr. Macleod, in his book on the Doctrine and Validity of the Ministry and Sacraments of the National Church of Scotland (the Baird Lecture for 1903) makes the Presbyterian doctrine perfectly clear. He says that the Presbyterian Church of Scotland did not condemn ordination by bishops, but held bishops could ordain

[1] *Apostolic Ministry in the Scottish Church*, pp. 252–3.
[2] *Ib.*, p. 254.

because they were presbyters. "The succession through presbyters might be secured by succession through bishops, not because they were bishops, but because they were presbyters."

Herein lay originally the fundamental difference between Presbyterians and Independents. The former considered that all ministerial power was vested in the office-bearers, whereas the latter maintained that it was vested in the body of the Church. Thus the Presbyterians laid great stress on the doctrine of succession. They declared that Christ "hath judged it meet that there should be a succession of pastors and teachers in His Church even unto the end of the world . . . and hath deputed the care of the continuation of this ministerial office unto such as have been already called thereunto, requiring them to commit the things they have received unto faithful men who shall be able to teach others also" (Calamy, *Life of Baxter*, p. 454).

But at the same time Dr. Macleod warns us that "Priestly and prophetic offices were emphatically distinguished among the Presbyterians. They held that there is no priesthood now on earth except that which is common to all believers." The ministry is a priesthood only in a representative capacity, appointed for the due ordering of worship and administering the Sacraments. "But the prophetic office remains in full force; for the preaching of the Gospel . . . is emphatically the work of the ministry." And accordingly, as Dr. Macleod naturally says, "the conception of succession will therefore be differently regarded according to the view held as to the nature of the ministry." The priestly conceptions bring in the idea of authority to offer sacrifice. The prophetic conception suggests

personal fitness to declare the Word of Life. Accordingly, the sort of succession involved in priesthood seems to Dr. Macleod to be mechanical, while the succession involved in the prophetic office seems intellectual and spiritual.

At the same time he is apprehensive that objections to Apostolic Succession have their danger. And he imagines that what is more required at the present time in Scotland is the reassertion of the source of ministerial authority, and the possession of a true succession in the presbyterate of the Scottish Established Church. "The term 'Apostolic Succession' has associations which rather repel the minds of" Scottish people. But he insists on the necessity of maintaining it.

But when it comes to precise definition of the Presbyterian principle of succession he is conscious that the task is not an easy one. "As a question of ministerial order and authority we have to remark that it may be difficult to find a middle position between holding the authority which comes from ministerial succession, and the acceptance of Congregationalism." According to Congregationalism the authority to create ministers resides in the congregation. According to Presbyterianism it lies in the presbyters. And it is a simple fact of history that the Congregational principle, "whether it is right or wrong, lawful or unlawful . . . was consistently condemned by the Reformers, and consistently rejected by the Church of Scotland." According to Presbyterianism it is the preaching presbyters to whom it doth belong to ordain. According to Presbyterianism, laymen have no authority to ordain.

Another ground for ministerial authority than "a

voluntary and self-made association assuming the name of Church, and taking to itself the functions of ordination," must be found. "This authority comes through an unbroken succession of presbyters, coincident for a time with succession in the Episcopate." This is asserted on the ground that Bishops ordained, not because they were Bishops, but because they were presbyters.

From this explanation the important conclusion is reached: "Accordingly, when we address the members of our own Church we must recall the grounds on which our ministry rests. It must either rest on a basis essentially common to Congregationalism, or it is a lawful ministry because no one has taken it to himself, but has been judged and ordained by those to whom the function doth belong—that is, those who have due authority."

Now if this principle of succession through the Presbyterian ministry is maintained in Scotland, we must desire to know by what arrangement Presbyterians and Congregationalists combined into one united Church in South India. Did the Congregationalist accept the ministerial principles of the Presbyterian, or the Presbyterian those of the Congregationalist? The problem concerns the constitution of the Church of Christ, which, plainly, on Presbyterian principles, must be substantially the same thing everywhere. The doctrine of the ministry cannot rightfully be subject to geographical contradictions.

After contrasting the Presbyterian doctrine of the ministry with the Congregational, Dr. Macleod drew briefly the contrast between the Presbyterian and the Anglican.

"Both held the necessity for a ministry duly authorised; both held the principle of succession as that which ordinarily gave authority." He explains this to mean apart from speculative and exceptional cases, such as Christians wrecked on a desert island. "Both used the ancient rite of ordination by imposition of hands. But they differed essentially as to the merits of the historic ministry which each adopted. The Anglican Church went back to the period when the Episcopate had emerged as distinct from the presbyterate and occupied a primacy over it. The Presbyterian went further back to the period when Bishop and Presbyster were identical." [1]

This is not an adequate statement of the contrast between Anglican and Presbyterian principles, and that for two reasons. The fact is, the Anglican did not simply go back to the period when the Episcopate had become distinct from the Presbyterate. It continued the historic ministry which it found up to the time of the Reformation in use.

The second is that the Presbyterian, while reverting to a period when the Bishop and the Presbyter were identical, left out of sight the all-important fact that the Bishop or Presbyter of the Scriptures was not the highest type of ministry, since above him was the controlling authority of the Apostles.

Presbyterians held that there is no order in the Church above that of Presbyter. But they also hold that experience shows the value of appointment of Superintendents with special executive powers.

In Gorrie's book on Episcopal Methodism in the United States, published in 1852, the difficulty of the

[1] Pp. 175–88.

use of the episcopal name without explaining the doctrine thereby represented is very clearly illustrated. The author warns us carefully that "the Methodist Episcopal Church is not Episcopal in the Church of England or Protestant Episcopal sense of the term." What then does he understand the Episcopal ministry to mean in the Church of England? He says that the Church of England claims to have derived a succession of Bishops from the Apostles, and that by virtue of this regular succession, in which he himself does not for a moment believe, the Bishops of the Church of England and the American Episcopal Church claim the sole right of ordination. In this sense he assures us that the Methodist Church is not Episcopal. The Episcopacy of Methodism is, he tells us, of that moderate character which makes the office itself entirely dependent on the will of the eldership or presbytery of the Church.

Grave injury is done to the idea of the Episcopate by regarding it merely as a method of government, and ignoring more or less that it is a method of ordination; a means for the transmission of ministerial authority. Thus Principal Lindsay's History, in the edition published in 1922, can still assure its readers that the Episcopal function is continued in the appointment of the reformed Superintendents. Something very similar to this was asserted at Lausanne.

On behalf of the Episcopate it is argued, by some who reject the doctrine of Apostolic Succession, that this form of ministry ought to be retained on *practical* grounds, because it has proved its usefulness. And it is urged that its practical value is confirmed by the fact that some non-Episcopal bodies are moving towards a form of government which is Episcopal in all but the

name. Surely that statement represents a very inadequate conception of what has been historically meant by Episcopal ministry. The valuation of the Episcopate on practical grounds is often accompanied by an express proviso, that, if the old order of ministry is found unsuitable to express the spiritual experience of modern life, it must inevitably be changed; not lightly, of course, but if at the present time reunion could be secured by a totally new form of organisation, it would be the duty of the Church to create a new form. And the Church has the authority to do it. This assertion is qualified by the opinion that since the Episcopal ministry is so ancient it is not likely that the necessity of its abolition will arise. And indeed it is questionable whether any other form would be so likely to bring reunion into effect. All this, however, reduces the whole subject of the ministry to a question of form and a matter of opinion: an opinion on which the progressive and the conservative mind might easily and naturally disagree.

To advise compliance with the Episcopal method of appointing ministers merely on the ground of its practical expediency in the interests of reunion is natural. But it is not without its difficulties. For the ancient Episcopal Communions do not regard the historic Episcopate merely as a form, but as involving a principle. Indeed it is really questionable whether any form of ordination is a form and nothing more, or whether it does not imply a doctrine about the nature of the ministry. The ancient Communions of East and West did not regard Episcopal ordination as merely a matter of expediency, but as an obligation from which they dare not on principle depart. If,

therefore, the Church of England offers such ordination to Nonconformists only on the practical ground that this is best adapted to secure external unity, and if the Nonconformists accept it only on the distinct understanding that no doctrinal meaning is implied, neither the offer nor the acceptance will secure approval from the East or from the West, since what really matters is not the form but the principle which underlies it.

There are further difficulties which the merely utilitarian estimate of Episcopacy throws in the way of lasting unity. For if it is the inherent and inalienable right of the congregation in virtue of its essential character to confer ministerial authority and to decide for itself what form, if any, that ministry shall take, and what shall be the method of ordination, it follows that the consent of one generation to have its ministries episcopally ordained cannot bind the following generation in perpetuity, since no power on earth can deprive a Church of its inherent right to determine its own ministerial constitution.

It would therefore always be possible for a Church to reject the ministry which it had previously adopted, and to substitute another type. In any case, if it were to adopt an Episcopal ministry, that adoption on the Congregational theory of the Church could only mean that the congregation conferred authority on its Bishops, and that the Bishops derived their status entirely from the congregation. What the congregation gave the congregation could also take away.

If *The Congregational Quarterly Review* may be taken as a fair representative of the general attitude among English Congregationalists towards Episcopal ordination, there does not appear the smallest desire on their

part to accept it, whatever their brethren in South India may do. The following editorial of July 1929 is significant:

" Of more immediate importance is it, that Anglicans should understand our position, especially in view of the reaction the South India proposals might have in this country. So many Anglicans seem to think that the only trouble is with an 'interim period,' after which, when all present ministers are dead and gone, all will agree to be episcopally ordained. This is merely to bury the head in the sand. It is not the interim period that worries us : it is the whole doctrine of Apostolic Succession, which we believe to be utterly pernicious, and one of the greatest handicaps of the Church in its fight for the Kingdom of God. We cannot imagine anything more remote from the opinion of the rank and file of Free Churchmen than such a view as that of the Archbishop of York in his May *Diocesan Gazette :*

" ' In all schemes for reunion between Reformed Churches there has been agreement, so far as I know, that after the Union all ordinations shall be Episcopal. These schemes therefore provide that, when the period of transition is ended, the Apostolic Succession will be secured in the United Church. So far as differences arise they concern the interim period. Here we have at once to safeguard our Catholic heritage, but to take care that we do not so safeguard it for ourselves as to miss the chance of imparting it to others. A scheme which in fact brings within the scope of the Apostolic Succession, as we understand it, those ministries which are now without it, has obviously asserted the Catholic principle of the ministry with great effectiveness. It is, as I think, in that perspective that we must consider

how far proposals for the difficult period of transition really compromise that principle. It is really misleading to isolate the proposals for transition, and to denounce them as a surrender of principle, if the effect of the scheme as a whole will be, after a short lapse of time, to establish that principle in a position of dominance over the whole field. Certainly the proposals for the interim must be very carefully scrutinised: we are trustees for a heritage of priceless value for the whole Church and must not whittle it away. But we are equally bound not to miss the chance of bestowing this gift on a wider fellowship of Christians if such an opportunity is offered. Our duty is not only to uphold our principles, but to commend them!' "

So far *The Congregationalist* editorial quotes from the Archbishop of York. On this extract it makes the following reflections:

" It cannot be said too clearly that while we want with all our hearts to work and worship with all followers of Christ, we do *not* want our ministries ' brought within the scope of the Apostolic Succession,' and we do not intend to allow the principle of Apostolic Succession to be ' established in a position of dominance over the whole field '; for that, we believe, would be cutting off one of the arms with which the Church should fight the battle of the Lord. Hundreds, thousands of Free Church ministers would give up their ministries to-morrow were the only conditions of retaining them that of Apostolic Succession."

This Congregationalist attitude in England towards Episcopal succession makes us wonder with what sentiments they regard the movement towards Episcopacy among the Congregationalists in South India. There is evidently in many ways much to be considered,

and the utmost caution to be cultivated, for fear that reunion in one direction may hinder it in another, or precipitate secession elsewhere.

There is one final reflection which it is essential to bear in mind. What Christians are aspiring to secure is unity. The entire discussion on the Episcopate is in its bearing on that consummation. Now the history of the Christian centuries shows that the Bishop was the local centre of unity. By means of their Synodical deliberations the Episcopate collectively exerted over Christendom a powerful unifying control. No doubt it is easy to point to contradictions. There were heretical Bishops. There were insubordinate rulers, and disintegrating tendencies in those who of all others should have held together in the closest unity. Nevertheless, these were on the whole the exceptions. Protestant historians recognise that the Episcopate did on the whole splendidly fulfil a great unifying responsibility.

But it must not be forgotten that this effective unifying control was not based on a theory that this form of government was the best. It was based on the conviction that the Episcopate possessed a Divine authority transmitted by consecration through the Apostles from Christ. That was undeniably the universal belief. And it is intelligible enough that the collective Episcopate should exert a powerful unifying control where that belief in its Divine authority was deeply rooted in the conscience of Christians. But it is quite another matter for the Episcopate to secure the same unifying power if the doctrine of its divinely transmitted authority were rejected. An optional form of ministry retained on the ground of practical utility has not the

same appealing influence as one maintained in obedience to the original action and direction of Christ. It is not reasonable to expect a form accepted but unexplained to possess the same authority, or acquire the same deference, as one whose principles are clearly affirmed and are of a supernatural character. A ministry conceived as Apostolic must always be more impressive than one which is only conceived as utilitarian.

CHAPTER VII

CANON STREETER'S THEORIES

A RECENT criticism of the origins of the Christian ministry is to be found in Dr. Streeter's book on *The Primitive Church*. Dr. Streeter's thesis is that the inability of Episcopalians, Presbyterians and Independents to demolish their opponents' case is because a corresponding diversity existed in the primitive Church. At the end of the first century there existed, in different provinces of the Roman Empire, different systems of Church government. Among these the Episcopalian, the Presbyterian and the Independent can each discover the prototype of the system to which he himself adheres. Accordingly, Dr. Streeter applies to the various systems of the Christian ministry the classic words of Alice in Wonderland: "Everyone has won, and all shall have prizes."

This introduction is certainly fresh and breezy. It is well outside the academic and the dull. But the hypothesis must be subjected to sober, if dull, reflection.

In the first place, supposing it were actually true that three systems of the Christian ministry, so distinct and different as the Episcopal, the Presbyterian and the Congregational, existed in the Apostolic age, it would not necessarily follow that they all were equally legitimate products. The more distinct and different they are, the more acute would become the problem of their compatibility within the same communion.

Dr. Streeter does not notice this. He writes as an historical critic, not as a theologian. His description of the ministry in the familiar phrase, "different systems of Church government," without dwelling on the question whether these different systems involve different dogmatic principles, illustrates the limited way in which the ministry is being regarded.

It is quite one thing to say that three different systems of Church government existed in the beginnings of our religion. It is quite another thing to say that they had an equal right to exist, and therefore that their existence confers an equal justification on modern Episcopal, Presbyterian and Congregational principles. That is obviously what cannot rightfully be assumed. It is, in fact, the very thing which requires to be proved. And no attempt whatever is made in this attractive volume to prove it. What if one or other of these different systems was a crude imperfect form, an inadequate manifestation of the Christian institution?

Before we can decide whether the Episcopal, Presbyterian and Congregationalist systems as they exist in modern life correspond with three such systems in the original religion, we must define what those three systems represent. The essential distinction of the Episcopal principle consists in the transmission of ministerial authority from Christ through the Apostles in various degrees. It is the doctrine of Apostolic Succession. It involves a hierarchy; a ministry commissioned to minister, and a ministry commissioned to ordain. The essential distinction of the Presbyterian principle is a single transmitted ministry, which all its recipients have power to confer on others. The essential distinction of the Congregational principle consists

in recognition by the Congregation of ministerial vocation, and in rejection of Apostolic Succession.

Now there are no doubt apparent resemblances to some extent between these modern distinctive ministerial principles and the primitive conditions which existed in different places. But surely these resemblances are no more than superficial. These three great types of ministry as they now exist are more or less mutually incompatible. They are based on fundamentally different principles. In one of them transmission of ministerial authority from ordainer to ordained is essential. In another of them there is no room whatever for this principle at all. How can it be said that the Apostolic Churches, with Apostolic approval, impartially recognised and accepted all three discordant principles? Was one local Church legitimately subject to Apostolic authority, while another was equally legitimately independent of all external control? Were the presbyters legitimately ordained in one place by the laying on of the hands of Apostles or of Apostolic persons, and in another place appointed by the congregation without any Apostolic ordination? The more we try to think this out, and the more carefully we compare the ministerial facts in the primitive Church with the three sharply contrasted and mutually exclusive ministerial principles of the modern Church, the less possible it becomes to regard the former as the natural explanation of the contradictions in the latter.

A similar reflection is suggested by the invariable development of the primitive Churches into the selfsame ministerial constitution, not only in form, but in principles. The Episcopal, Presbyterian and Congregational systems are, as they now exist, exceedingly diffi-

cult to blend in unity. They are for the most part conscious of incompatibility of principle. Now if these three separate distinctive principles existed in the earliest age, how was it that they matured as one Church, not as three separate communities? The more distinctive the peculiarities ascribed to them the more difficult would their union be. Why did the Congregational merge in the Presbyterian, and the Presbyterian in the Episcopal? Dr. Streeter quotes the instance of Diotrephes and his resistance against the Elder John. Dr. Streeter thinks that John the Elder was the Bishop of Ephesus, or rather, ignoring, of course, later associations of the term, the Archbishop of the district. Was the Archbishop of that district exaggerating his authority, lording it over a local Church not subject to his jurisdiction? Or was he claiming an authority which was his by right? Was Diotrephes an insubordinate suffragan defying his superior, or an unruly Presbyterian minister, or was he legitimately defending the principle of Congregational independence against external usurpation? Whatever answer may be given, the singular and impressive fact remains that the Episcopate became, without exception, universal, and with its ascendancy the ministerial principles therein involved.

Is it unreasonable to say that this world-wide development of communities which, according to Dr. Streeter, were of various systems—Episcopal, Presbyterian and Congregational—into one invariable constitution, with the same doctrine behind it, is a proof that something in the genius of the religion was the cause of this ministerial identity?

It must further be remembered that if Presbyterianism and Congregationalism have in recent experience

displayed a most impressive capacity to unite, this has only been brought about by the abandonment of distinctive principles on either side. The Presbyterianism which unites with Congregationalism can only do so by ceasing to maintain the indispensable character of ministerial succession. Nor is modern Congregationalism able to unite with Episcopacy without declining to accept the doctrine of Apostolic Succession, which doctrine nevertheless the Church at Rome, in A.D. 96, set forth as the Christian principle to the Church at Corinth.

A characteristic feature of this essay is its constant indulgence in conjectures. It is quite curious to note how such phrases as "if so," "it would look as if," "we may surmise" recur; "what more likely than," "if we may take leave to assume," "these Bishops may have been a trifle jealous," "John the Elder may have found it more difficult than he had anticipated." Still more striking is the application of guess-work to the first Epistle of S. Peter. The suggestion is that the name of the author was lost. Its supreme religious quality led to the conjecture that it was the work of an Apostle. Since the style would not allow it to be ascribed to Paul, it was natural to conjecture that it was the work of Peter. But this conjecture was mistaken. In place of this ascription is offered "a reasonable guess at the name of the actual author." Dr. Streeter's guess is as follows:—"I am bold to hazard such, offering it, I would emphasise, not as a result of criticism, but frankly as a guess—but I hope a scientific guess." The guess is that it was written by Aristion, Bishop of Smyrna. The critic is "quite aware that the evidence falls a long way short of demonstration!"

But if it is provisionally accepted, we have a document which we can date. It is contemporary with the Apocalypse, *i.e.* A.D. 90–95. Moreover, if Aristion was a man of the character and religious insight capable of writing such a letter as that mistakenly ascribed to S. Peter, " it would not have been long before in his own Church he attained a position of unique leadership." And this would help to explain the existence of the monarchical Episcopate which we find at Smyrna twenty years later in the time of S. Polycarp and S. Ignatius.

This conjectural method seems carried to excess. Structures are built on foundations which are lacking in solidity. One is left with a haunting doubt whether the structure is more than imagination. We feel uncertainty where earth ends and cloud begins. They look connected, but the connection is unascertainable. It cannot be verified. It escapes us. As we advance it recedes.

The principal part of Dr. Streeter's book is his treatment of the early document called the *Didache*, or the teaching of the Apostles, the Letter of S. Clement of Rome to the Corinthians, and the Ignatian letters.

Dr. Streeter says that " the *Didache* is the stronghold of those who think that the Church Order of the Primitive Church closely resembled what we now know as Independency ": and " the letters of Ignatius have always been the embattled fortress of the defenders of Episcopalianism."

It is certainly true that the *Didache* and the letters of Ignatius present contrasted ideas about the Christian ministry. Dr. Streeter also remarks elsewhere that " between the *Didache* and Ignatius there is as great a

gulf theologically as there is in the matter of Church order." That contrast is also true. And therefore it becomes of great importance to describe which of these contrasted Christian types is closer to Apostolic ideals of theology and ministry.

Dr. Streeter ascribes great value to the *Didache*. There is nothing about it in his essay except praise. His treatment of the Letters of Ignatius is exactly the contrary. Both the author and his writings are depreciated. The *Didache* is said to have been highly esteemed in the Church, which is true. But it is taken for granted that it was highly valued for its remarks about the ministry, whereas on this there is not the slightest shadow of proof. The facts appear to be that the *Didache* was valued for the moral and practical instructions which its earlier part contains, and that, in an age when religious literature was scarce, its moral exhortations were gladly utilised. But it is not safe to assume that its ministerial conceptions were the cause of its popularity. Dr. Streeter conjectures that the *Didache* is a manual composed at Antioch approximately in A.D. 90, and circulated with the authority of that great Syrian Church. He maintains that its system of Church government agrees with that which is found at Antioch in Acts xiii. 1–3: "Now there were at Antioch, in the Church that was there, prophets and teachers; Barnabas, and Symeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen the foster-brother of Herod the Tetrach, and Saul. And as they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. Then, when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away."

This incident in the Acts is admittedly ambiguous, probably owing to its brevity. But the passage cannot mean that this was S. Paul's ordination to the Apostleship, for he was clearly convinced that his Apostolic labours were his response to the commission received at his conversion. "It is clear," says Ferdinand Baur, "that here (Gal. i. 20) the Apostle does all in his power to meet the assertion that during the time which immediately followed his conversion he stood in such a relation to the elder Apostles that his Apostolic mission could be looked upon as a thing derived from their Apostolic authority. He wished to have it believed that he entered on his Apostolic mission under the influence of a revelation vouchsafed to him alone, in a perfectly free and independent manner, unbiased by any human interposition" (Baur, *Paul*, I. 108, English translation).

Now if S. Paul's Apostleship had been conferred upon him by the Church at Antioch, and he received his actual ordination from prophets, his whole position would have been inferior and subordinate to that of the Twelve. For the Twelve received their authority through no prophetic ministerial subordinates, but direct from Christ. The incident at Antioch cannot be harmonised with S. Paul's reiterated affirmation of direct independent commission, unless it was not an ordination at all, but only a service for the dismissal of missionaries.

But if this conclusion be correct, it follows that the ministry in the Church at Antioch did not merely consist of persons who were nothing more than prophets and teachers; for they also had an Apostle in their midst.

Dr. Streeter indeed remarks that S. Paul, while in residence at Antioch, was not the matured thinker of the Epistles, and that those Epistles prove a rapid and remarkable development in ideas from the Apostle's earlier stage. But it ought at least to be added that S. Paul, on the return journey from his missionary foundation, " ordained elders in every Church " (Acts xiv. 23), and on arriving once more at Antioch " gathered the Church together " and " rehearsed all that God had done with them." S. Paul could not possibly have failed to impress on the Church at Antioch his principles about the ministry, nor have left them ignorant that he regarded himself as the divinely authorised ordainer of the elders whom he had placed in every Church which he had founded.

Why Dr. Streeter speaks of the " more or less Presbyterian organisation of the Pauline Churches in Asia " seems difficult to explain. It was no doubt a ministry of presbyters which S. Paul created in the Asian Churches. But the essence of Presbyterianism is that the presbyter has no ecclesiastical superior, that is to say, that no ministerial order exists superior in kind to his own. But the Asian Churches were all under Apostolic control. S. Paul was the superior of the presbyters—their ordainer—their divinely authorised superior. This is exactly what Presbyterianism excludes.

Then, further, Dr. Streeter draws a sharp distinction between the form of ministry in the Church at Jerusalem and that in the Church at Antioch. The Jerusalem type consisted of one solitary presiding chief, S. James, subsequently known as the Bishop. There was a non-Episcopal government in Jerusalem. But at Antioch

there was a plural ministry of prophets and teachers. And nothing is said of a Bishop at Antioch.

Certainly the one presiding Bishop may have been a later development in some Churches than in others. But it must be remembered, indeed Dr. Streeter lays stress upon it, that S. Peter, if chiefly resident in Jerusalem, paid visits to the Church at Antioch. Neither Church could have been ignorant of the ministerial principles of the other.

Bear then in mind that the Church at Antioch was familiar with the presence of S. Peter. It must have known the ministerial conditions at Jerusalem. It was also familiar with S. Barnabas and S. Paul, familiar with the development of ministry which the Apostle of the Gentiles had created in the Churches of Asia. And bearing this in mind, consider the ideas about the ministry inculcated in the *Didache*.

The ministerial conceptions underlying this document are of the most rudimentary character. "Appoint for yourselves," says the *Didache*, "Bishops and Deacons." To whom are these words addressed? Who are the persons who possess the authority to appoint? The word translated "appoint" is the same as in Acts xiv. 23, where it is said that S. Paul and S. Barnabas "appointed them elders in every city." Does the *Didache* ascribe to the congregation a power which, according to the Acts, was exercised by the Apostles? The *Didache* regulates the privileges and rights of Apostles and prophets. An Apostle might not remain more than two days in the same place. A prophet might settle in any community.

On this regulation it seems inevitable to inquire, as Dean Armitage Robinson does in his careful study of

this document, " was there ever a Church which refused to allow Apostles more than a two days' stay? " [1] Dr. Streeter is conscious of the difficulty, and suggests that " the use of the word Apostle may be in part an intentional archaism." [2] But if so, the writer's use of the term Apostle is an anachronism which did not represent the facts existing round him, and which may be an inaccurate attempt to reproduce an earlier stage. The historic value of the document is thereby greatly discounted. Dr. Armitage Robinson's judgment on its value is to me convincing. Its ideas of the ministry " do not seem to fit in anywhere in either time or place. The community which it presupposes is out of relation to all our knowledge of Church history. It is as much an isolated phenomenon after all our researches as when it surprised us at its first appearance." [3] " It would appear to belong to some isolated community, in which there lingered a condition of life and organisation which had elsewhere passed away." [4]

It would no doubt be naturally the case that various parts of the Church developed at a different rate. Practices and theories may have prevailed in one congregation and have been absent in another. There was no doubt diversity of receptiveness in local Churches as well as in individuals. Some communities might be remote from the general broad current of Christian thought. Backward Churches, misguided congregations, ignorant pastors, would exist in the first century as well as in later periods. But it is quite another matter to value them equally and to maintain that

[1] *Journal of Theological Studies*, April 1912, p. 340.
[2] *The Primitive Church*, p. 147. [3] *J.T.S.*, p. 340.
[4] Robinson, *Ephesians*, p. 98, note.

whatever is is right. Some test is necessary by which historical fact and development must be tried.

Dean Armitage Robinson, in his latest reflections on the *Didache*, suggests the need of exceeding caution in the inference to be drawn from the document. He thinks its date cannot be earlier than the middle of the second century. "But how much later we might reasonably go it is not easy to say. For once we have perceived that the writer's aim is to represent the teaching and practice, not of his own but of Apostolic days, we need no longer ask what part of the Church could have maintained so primitive an organisation to so late a date."

"But the date has become a matter of comparatively small moment when once we have recognised the author's ruling principle. He is deliberately constructing an Apostolic monument: he is describing what presumably was the Apostolic 'ordering' of the Gentile Churches. Incidentally he betrays himself here and there by using the language of post-Apostolic writers, or by attributing to the Apostolic age practices which undoubtedly belong to a later period. His object may have been to recall the Church of his own day to a greater simplicity by presenting this picture of the primitive Church Society. . . . We may admire his diligence in research and the ingenuity with which he presents his results: but we must be exceedingly wary if we look to him for history." [1]

This estimate of the *Didache* by the Dean of Wells shows at least the difficulty of regarding the document as an authoritative circular issued from the great

[1] *Barnabas, Hermas and the Didache*, Donnellan Lectures, 1920 pp. 81–83.

Church at Antioch. But on that assumption very much of Dr. Streeter's theory depends.

Dr. Streeter says that the author of the *Didache* wanted to create wherever it did not yet exist a ministry of Bishops and Deacons, and thereupon suggests that in any Church where one and only one prophet had permanently settled, that prophet would have become to all intents and purposes a monarchical Bishop. He would be the regular celebrant of the Eucharist. This suggestion is then applied to Antioch. "Suppose then that in the Church of Antioch a time came when there was only one such resident prophet, and he a man of ambition and possessed of administrative ability—in a single generation the Church order which the *Didache* implies would, *ipso facto*, and as it were automatically, harden into a threefold ministry of Bishops, Presbyters and Deacons." Here are three rather large assumptions: (1) that in the great Church of Antioch, which in S. Paul's time included various prophets, there was by the close of the century only one; (2) that this one was a man dominated by the vice or virtue of ambition; (3) that he further possessed exceptional administrative ability; and indeed, further, that the origin of the monarchical Episcopate was due to the personal qualities of the local minister, and not to any higher cause or ecclesiastical principle. This accumulation of accidental possibilities is surely a strange foundation on which to build the only historic ministry which has survived the storms of all the centuries.

Next to the *Didache* it is advisable to set the Epistle of S. Clement to the Corinthians, and to have before our minds some of its main ideas about the ministry.

According to S. Clement, the facts are these. The

Apostles appointed certain of their converts, when sufficiently tested, to be Bishops and Deacons. They did more. For " our Apostles knew . . . that there would be strife over the name of the Bishop's office. For this cause, therefore, they appointed the aforesaid persons, and afterwards they provided a continuance, that if these should fall asleep, other approved men should succeed to their ministration." S. Clement then goes on to speak of ministers who were " appointed by the Apostles or afterwards by other men of repute with the consent of the whole Church." There are plainly here two sets of ordainers. First the Apostles, and secondly those whom S. Clement describes as other men of repute. S. Clement sees in the facts an orderly development. The Apostolic ministry did not come to an end. It was not replaced by a ministry of another kind. For the Apostles themselves had made provision for its continuance after they were dead. When the Apostolic ordainer had passed away it made no difference to the constitution of the Church. Other ordainers were through Apostolic forethought and direction already provided. And so the ministry went on.

But S. Clement does not only record the facts about this ministerial succession, he also gives a very remarkable exposition of the principles on which the ministry is based. Put briefly, it is the principle that order is God's first law. Order is essentially Divine. But order involves corresponding subordination. It is illustrated in the physical constitution of man. It dominates the whole system of God's chosen people. To the high priest his proper functions are assigned, to the priests also theirs, and to the Levites theirs. " And the layman is bound by the layman's ordinances." Clement insists

that "while men follow the institution of the Master they cannot go wrong."

This principle of an authorised ministry, according to S. Clement, applies to the Church. "Let each of you brethren in his own order give thanks unto God, maintaining a good conscience and not transgressing the appointed rule of his service." Transgression of the appointed rule of service, which rule it will be noted S. Clement refers to the Apostles, and indeed behind them to Divine directions, is in his judgment a matter of unspeakable gravity. It was serious in Israel. It is more serious in the Church, because in proportion to our greater knowledge is our deeper responsibility.

Then comes the famous passage on the principle of transmission of ministerial authority. "Jesus Christ was sent forth from God. So then Christ is from God, and the Apostles are from Christ. Both therefore came by the will of God in the appointed order." This authority to administer S. Clement has already said was conferred by the Apostles on the ministers whom they appointed. This orderly succession is not broken off. S. Clement looks round on Christendom. He contemplates the results of the action of the Apostles. He knows that some of the presbyters whom the Apostles ordained have passed away. He tells the Corinthians reproachfully that he thinks those presbyters were fortunate, since they have no apprehension of being removed by men from their appointed place. But there are some ministers still living whom the Apostles ordained. And whether the existing ministers were ordained by the Apostles, or by the notable men provided for that purpose, clearly makes, in S. Clement's opinion, no difference at all. The Church has no right

to displace them from their functions. The congregation at Corinth has made a sedition among its presbyters. Clement pronounces emphatically that their conduct cannot be defended.

The principles of ministry which S. Clement here expounds are luminously clear. God has constituted the ministry of men in a definite order, and in the order appointed by His Will. Christ is from God, the Apostles are from Christ, the presbyters are from the Apostles, and therefore their ejection is a sin. The Corinthian Church is regarded by S. Clement as in rebellion against divinely appointed authority. The whole argument of S. Clement's letter rests on the principle that the ministry is derived from Christ through the Apostles. S. Clement does not attempt to prove this principle. He does not argue that it must be so. He takes for granted that it is a principle which the Church at Corinth cannot dispute.

We next arrive at the letters of S. Ignatius. Dr. Streeter regards S. Ignatius principally as a psychological study. He subjects the Bishop to the process of psycho-analysis, and pronounces an emphatic verdict on the unsatisfactory condition of the Bishop's mentality. Not only is he a person of neurotic temper, writing with excitement and exaggeration, a mentality for which due allowance must be made, but he is an "unhappy mixture of pride and humility"; psychologically an example of that neurotic variety of the will to power which is often found along with great ability, and not infrequently with high ideals. He is, moreover, a victim of self-deception. He is almost contemptuously treated.

"The neurotic temperament is frequently charac-

terised by an obsessive concentration on certain dominant ideas. To Ignatius the monarchical Episcopate is literally an *idée fixe*. It may easily happen that an *idée fixe* is an idea *intrinsically* valuable. In the circumstances of the time it probably was true statesmanship to strengthen the authority of the Episcopate. A policy may in itself be sound, and yet in a particular individual become neurotically an obsession."

This analysis of the psychological characteristics of S. Ignatius provokes reflections. The psychology of the saints is a very important matter. But it does not follow that every critic is qualified to be the analyst. There are such things as temperamental antipathies. And the antipathy of Dr. Streeter toward Ignatius is very pronounced. One is tempted to wonder what results a psycho-analysis of the critic might produce. There is no escaping the fact that Dr. Streeter not only dislikes Ignatius' temperament, but also dislikes his doctrines, and appears to be led unconsciously to employ a highly unfavourable analysis of the former to throw additional discredit upon the latter. But it is obvious that tendencies of this kind render objective and impartial results unattainable. It is questionable whether Dr. Streeter is not temperamentally disqualified from fair appreciation of the temperament of this particular saint.

Thus Dr. Streeter goes on to regard the theory of monarchical Episcopate as " a sound policy," which it was " true statesmanship to strengthen " in the circumstances of the opening years of the second century. But the possibility that this ministerial conception was due to Apostolic influence and direction is not even entertained. The language in which Ignatius advo-

cates it is regarded as gross exaggeration, due to infirmities of temperament. But what if his deep conviction was due to a consciousness that Apostolic guidance had led that way?

According to Dr. Streeter, S. Ignatius derived his chief support for his ministerial ideas from the Epistle of S. Clement. "We have seen reason to believe that before the time of Ignatius, the Church in Syria in this respect was less advanced than in other provinces. But if so, the dominant position of the Episcopate implied in the letters of Ignatius can only have come into existence after a period of acute struggle." Once that is granted, "it is obvious how valuable to the High Church party of that day Clement's letter would have been, with its exhortation to Christians to imitate the notable discipline of the Roman army, and its derivation of the authority of the regular ministry from Apostolic Succession."

"Clement seems to imply that at Corinth (and presumably at Rome) Church government was nearer to the Presbyterian type than to the Episcopalian." At any rate, if it was Presbyterian, it was a Presbyterianism of the older, stricter "High Church" type, since it was based on the doctrine of Apostolic Succession. It was not the sort of Presbyterianism which could easily coalesce with Congregationalism.

But although the Church Government at Rome was more Presbyterian than Episcopal, yet, according to Dr. Streeter, S. Ignatius misunderstood this. Ignatius read the analogy which S. Clement had drawn between the officers of the Jewish and of the Christian Church. "For unto the High Priest his proper services have been assigned, and to the Priests their proper office is

appointed, and upon the Levites their proper ministrations are laid. The layman is bound by the layman's ordinances." On this celebrated sentence Dr. Streeter remarks, that "what Clement had in mind when writing this was the analogy between the function of Christ and that of the High Priest worked out in the Epistle to the Hebrews." But the Epistle to the Hebrews was "probably unknown at Antioch at this date, or if they knew it they did not apply it to the present case. In a Church where the *Didache* was a religious classic, and where already a single resident prophet was established as the most important person in the community, the natural and obvious reading of Clement's words would make the point of his remark to be the correspondence between the three Old Testament orders of High Priest, Priest and Levite, and the Christian offices of Bishop, Presbyter and Deacon—more especially as the orders of Bishops and Presbyters were clearly distinguished both in Asia and in Jerusalem, that is, in the Churches of the provinces which marched with Syria on either side."

"The writer of the letter—there is no reason to doubt that his name was Clement—would at least be the presbyter normally chosen to represent the Roman Church in its dealings with other Churches, and was very likely in other respects the leading personage in the Church. What would be more natural for a Syrian Christian than to assume that Clement held at Rome a position of formally recognised supremacy, similar to that which in the Church of Jerusalem had descended in the family of James, and which John the Elder had occupied in Asia? In the light of the practice of these Churches, the passage of Clement . . . would natur-

ally be read as implying that he, Clement, occupied at Rome a position analogous to that of the Jewish High Priest—that is, belonged to an order hierarchically distinct from the other Presbyters. So interpreted, the moral of his letter would appear to be that the monarchical Episcopate was the one right and Apostolic system."

The achievement, therefore, of Ignatius is described as follows:—" Like many an Anglican vicar in England in the last three-quarters of a century, Ignatius during his tenure of office changed his Church from Low to High, and so brought it into conformity with what he sincerely believed to be the mind of Christ—and what, beyond doubt, was the fashion of the age."

This is a highly speculative construction. It assumes " an acute struggle " over the dominant position of the Episcopate at Antioch.

Yet in one place Dr. Streeter says, " We shall entirely misunderstand the nature of the conflict if we think of it as a struggle between Ignatius and the body of Presbyters. Ignatius is not fighting for the supremacy of the Bishop as against the Presbyter: he is fighting for the supremacy of the regular Church officers as a body."

But a few pages away Dr. Streeter can say that the consolidation of an ecclesiastical discipline centred in the monarchical bishop was the ideal for which Ignatius had lived. " What," he asks, " is the meaning of the extreme anxiety in regard to the election of his successor? . . . Did he (Ignatius) know that the party he had vanquished had raised their heads, and were intriguing to prevent the supreme power ever again being concentrated in the hands of a single person?"

These two estimates do not seem to agree. If, as the first passage says, Ignatius was fighting for the supremacy of the regular Church officers as a body, he was apparently a Presbyterian opposing Congregationalism. If, as the second says, he was promoting what others were preventing, the concentration of supreme ministerial power in the hands of a single person, he was an Episcopalian opposing Presbyterians. It seems far more accordant with the facts to say that: "Of hindrances or difficulties obstructing the development of the Episcopate, of friction or strife, between Bishops and Priests, there is nowhere any trace." This estimate by Bardenhewer (*Geschichte der altkirchlichen Litteratur*, I. 134) is surely the simple fact. The existence of acute struggle rests on the unproved assumption that the Church of Antioch issued the *Didache*, and on an inference from the fervid Syrian temperament, and the masterly ambitious aims of Ignatius. These are slender foundations on which to build. There is not any proof of the existence of a party at Antioch intriguing to prevent the supreme ministerial power ever again being concentrated in the hands of a single person. Nor is there any proof of opponents whom Ignatius is supposed to have vanquished. As a fact he was not the first Bishop of Antioch. He inherited the Episcopal place.

Dr. Streeter thinks that Ignatius was encouraged by reading S. Clement's letter, which he misunderstood, to promote at Antioch a form of Episcopal government, which he erroneously imagined to exist in Rome. That sounds, to say the least, paradoxical. It is admitted that Ignatius sincerely believed that what he was promoting was "the mind of Christ." He was in reality following "the fashion of the age." He was of "the

High Church party." Clement's letter gave him invaluable support, but chiefly apparently because he misapplied what it said. But from what source Ignatius derived his ministerial principles we are not told. It is not suggested that Clement's epistle created them, but only that it encouraged them. What then made Ignatius a High Churchman? Who taught him and convinced him that the monarchical Episcopate was the mind of Christ? Was he only led away by the fashion of the age? or was this sincere belief inherited from Apostolic precedent?

His letters written on his way to martyrdom at Rome prove what he found in the Asian cities was a monarchical Episcopate, not a collegiate Presbyterian ministry. He has no controversy with them. They have developed precisely on the same principles as the Church at Antioch.

Ignatius does not say that the Bishop is a successor of the Apostles. But he does speak of them as representing the authority of Christ. He says, speaking of Bishops, Presbyters and Deacons, "without these there is no Church deserving of the name." [1] He calls upon the people of the local Church to be "inseparable from Christ and the Bishop and the commandments of the Apostles." This expression, "the commandments of the Apostles," in this connection is believed by Lightfoot to mean that the Episcopate was instituted by the Apostles.

In the same speculative mood which pervades so much of this book, Dr. Streeter explains how the ministry had been developing at Rome. There was a College of Elders. Somebody acted as chairman. "If

[1] *Trall.* IV.

a man of any practical capacity, he might soon become a sort of permanent chairman of the College." But in times of crisis committee rule works badly. "Inevitably the chairman of the College would insensibly develop into a kind of Managing Director of the Board." All that "depended on the strength of character, efficiency and personal ambition of the presiding elders of early times." But there is something more subtle behind all this. "Power is most easily achieved by pretending not to want it." Presumably then S. Clement of Rome was an ambitious person astute enough to conceal his desire for power, and thereby attaining it. Dr. Streeter owns that Ignatius' omission to mention a Bishop at Rome does not prove that there was no such official, since he mentions no officials at all. But this unfortunately ecstatic Syrian Ignatius "had Episcopacy on the brain." And he salutes the Church of Rome as the model of a Christian Church. Such enthusiastic language in him is hard to understand if there was as yet no Bishop at Rome. Now, argues Dr. Streeter, "we may be quite sure that in every interview Ignatius had with the leading Christians at Rome, he reiterated with passionate conviction what is the main theme of all his other letters—the supreme necessity of concentrating power in the hands of a single Bishop." But "supposing Ignatius discovered, as he doubtless soon would, that in the matter of the centralised authority of the Bishop, Rome was not quite the model Church he had believed: psychologically it would have been almost inevitable that in this supreme emotional crisis the prophetic frenzy would come upon him and he would speak in the spirit. And what would he have said?" And so on.

Now the whole of his construction is purely speculative from beginning to end. All this picture of the Episcopate originating in strong characters, men of outstanding efficiency and conspicuous personal ambition, combined with astute knowledge of the world, and so converting a temporary chairmanship into a permanent function, and by their ascendancy dominating the other presbyters, and changing a Presbyterian family into a differentiated ministry over which they ruled and their successors after them, only illustrates what imagination can construct on the slenderest and most precarious basis.

Looking back on Dr. Streeter's criticism, it is clear that it is based on a high estimate of the *Didache* and a corresponding depreciation of the Ignatian letters. It assumes that the *Didache* was authorised by the second chief Church in Christendom—of which there is no evidence; that it was highly valued on the ground of its doctrine about the ministry—of which also there is no evidence.

Yet the work is anonymous—its date is quite unknown, its origin disputed, assigned to Egypt, to Asia, even to Rome. On any showing it represents ministerial ideas which faded entirely away. What is there in all this to justify assigning it a value far above letters whose authorship is known, whose origin from Antioch is unquestioned, and which represent ministerial conceptions which are the main stream of the Christian development?

Dr. Streeter incidentally observes that the derivation in S. Clement's letter of the authority of the regular ministry from Apostolic Succession was an aid to the High Church party of that day But he does not dwell

on the significance of the fact that the doctrine of Apostolic Succession already existed in Rome as early as A.D. 96, if that be the date of S. Clement's letter.

The Acts of the Apostles sketches the progress of Christianity, or of the Christian Church from Jerusalem through Antioch, and onward to Rome. If the ministerial organisation of the Asian Churches was more matured than that of Antioch because the mind of S. Paul was by that time more developed, it might reasonably be expected that the Church in Rome, where ultimately S. Paul resided, might exhibit the Apostle's most matured ministerial conceptions. The question from what source S. Clement derived his doctrine of Apostolic Succession deserves and provokes reflection. Is it not possible that it is derived from S. Paul himself?

It seems desirable here to recall Bishop Lightfoot's conclusion after his long study of ministerial origins. "If the preceding investigation be substantially correct, the threefold ministry can be traced to Apostolic direction; and short of an express statement we can possess no better assurance of a Divine appointment, or at least a Divine sanction."[1]

[1] Lightfoot, *Philippians* (later edition), p. 267.

CHAPTER VIII

DR. HEADLAM ON THE MINISTRY

THE Bishop of Gloucester (Dr. Headlam) has given us his interpretation of the facts about the ministry in the Primitive Church which led him to give his powerful support to the South Indian proposal to combine, at least for a time, an episcopally with a non-episcopally ordained ministry within an Episcopal Church.

There is, however, a very considerable school of thought in the English Church which finds his arguments unconvincing. His arguments have been repeated in various places, notably in his Charge to his Diocese—on the Church of England.

1. Dr. Headlam maintains that "if we study the New Testament we do not find any clear indication of the form of the Christian ministry."

This statement surely needs to be qualified by the facts that we find a form of ministry which owed its direct appointment to our Lord, and that we find after Whitsuntide that ministry differentiated into a hierarchy.

2. "The advocates of all the different systems which have prevailed have texts which they can quote that are most convincing to those already convinced, but singularly ineffective when applied to outsiders."

Is not the same thing true of the system of the Sacraments, and of the great doctrines of the Divinity of Christ, the Incarnation and the Atonement? Is

the ineffectiveness of a Scripture passage when applied to outsiders any real argument against the use the Church has made of it? Is not the ineffectiveness of texts frequently due to mistaken presuppositions in the mind of outsiders, rather than to misunderstanding of their real meaning on the part of the Church? The failure to convince is no proof that the interpretation is not true. The argument from ineffectiveness, if carried to its logical results, seems singularly dangerous.

3. Dr. Headlam says: "There are certainly texts which can be used in support of Episcopacy, but when we come to examine them we find the word *episcopos* is used as a designation of the *presbyter*. There is no clear indication of any form of monarchical Episcopacy in Apostolic times. It is certainly again quite clear that local Churches were at one time governed by bodies of presbyters; but when we look at the relation that they bore to the life of the Church as a whole, with its Apostles, prophets, evangelists and teachers, we fail to see any real resemblance to modern Presbyterian organisation. So in the same way, although a study of the Church life of Corinth will show us that there were congregational elements, yet S. Paul's relation to the Churches under him is not consistent with any complete form of congregational government. In fact, we may put it quite clearly—the government of the Church and the development of the ministry during the Apostolic Age was different from anything that has existed since."

This passage certainly goes a considerable way towards qualifying, if not neutralising, Canon Streeter's theory that "there existed in different provinces of the Roman Empire different systems of Church Govern-

ment—and that among them the Episcopalian, the Presbyterian, and the Independent can each discover the prototype of the system to which he himself adheres."

Dr. Headlam is quite clear that presbyters under the direction of Apostles are not presbyterian, and that congregational life guided by S. Paul is certainly not consistent with what is meant by Congregationalism or Independency. But he does not seem to treat with equal clearness the remaining form of ministry, namely, the episcopal. In the New Testament a bishop can be called a presbyter. But as Canon Streeter says, "it does not, however, follow that all presbyters could be called bishops" (p. 82). S. Peter could address the presbyters as their fellow presbyter (1 S. Peter v. 1), but it certainly does not follow that they could have addressed him as his fellow-Apostles. There is already a differentiated ministry which is neither Presbyterianism nor Congregationalism.

Dr. Headlam holds that "there is no clear indication of any form of monarchical Episcopacy in Apostolic times." That could not be expected on any theory of the ministry so long as the Apostles lived. But the statement depends very much on the use of the adjective "monarchical." What we certainly find in Apostolic times are two types of ministry : one with authority to minister, and another with authority to impart that ministry, that is, to ordain. Surely these facts require to be produced and considered before the conclusion is drawn that "the government of the Church and the development of the ministry during the Apostolic age was different from anything that has existed since." If allowance be made for the fact that everything must have a beginning, and that realities exist in germ before

they acquire completeness, this conclusion does not seem justified. The truth is that in this estimate far too much stress is laid on government, whereas it is clear that the Apostle was not only a ruler, he was also an ordainer.

And when Dr. Headlam adds, concerning prophets, "We know that they might preside at the Eucharist," it is necessary to ask, What is the evidence for this? It depends on a statement in that anonymous and much-debated document called the *Didache*. Now, considering that no man knows where or when that document was produced, it is difficult to rely upon its assertions, or to throw uncertainty upon documents which are not disputed, and which affirm quite categorically the principle of succession from the Apostles. And, as a matter of fact, there is no historical example on record of a prophet as such presiding at the Eucharist.

4. The Bishop of Gloucester maintains that "we cannot claim for Episcopacy more than other forms of ministry that it was ordained by our Lord or ordered by the Apostles."

Of course Dr. Headlam's authority gives great weight to an utterance of this kind. But after all, it is an individual opinion. Beside it must be set the weighty judgment of Bishop Lightfoot, that "the threefold ministry can be traced to Apostolic direction, and short of an express statement we can possess no better assurance of a Divine appointment, or at least a Divine sanction." Richard Hooker's language is quite similar to that of Bishop Lightfoot on this matter.

5. The Bishop of Gloucester recommends Episcopacy first on the ground that "it has the argument of antiquity in its favour."

It is questionable whether this argument possesses much cogency for the modern mind in general. It greatly depends on temperament, whether conservative or progressive. It is impressive to the student of history: it is not very effective to those for whom history is more or less a closed book. It is not likely to carry much weight, for example, in American Christianity. There is also in the modern mind a widespread impatience of any mere argument from antiquity. When a former Principal of King's College, London, used this argument on Dr. Dale of Birmingham, the answer was that if Episcopacy had lasted so long it was more than time we had a change.

6. The Bishop urges secondly that Episcopacy "has the argument, if not of universality, of something approaching it. From Apostolic times to the Reformation it is quite universal, and, so far as there was any opinion about it, looked on as essential and of divine origin."

Why is that qualifying clause "so far as there was any opinion about it" inserted? It leaves the impression that the Church was seldom concerned to pay attention to the matter; whereas it is notorious that this was not the case. The Church was characterised by a peculiar sensitiveness on the subject of the ordainer to the ministry. Any attempted deviation from the traditional principles touched the Church to the quick. For many a century no man not episcopally ordained would have been allowed to celebrate the Eucharist, nor would his ministrations have been accepted anywhere in Christendom. This was not a matter on which opinion was divided. The Episcopal ministry was not only universally maintained as a form, but also

as a principle. As Dr. Headlam says, "it was looked on as essential and of divine origin." Now this belief of the Church accounts for its continuance. If the belief is dismissed the fundamental reason for its continuance is destroyed.

7. With regard to ordination by the laying-on of hands, Dr. Headlam thinks that "we may legitimately argue that, following the example of the Apostles, we should adopt that method, but we cannot go further than that. We have no express command. We do not know whether the custom was looked upon as necessary: for example, we cannot say certainly whether prophets were or were not ordained by laying-on of hands, and we know that they might preside at the Eucharist."

One is left wondering how far uncertainty extends with regard to matters for which "we have no express command." For example, it applies to Confirmation. Do we know whether this custom was looked upon as necessary? This is decidedly important. For we adopt that method on the assumption that it is the way to confer the Holy Spirit. The example of the Apostles is accepted as our sufficient guarantee that where the method is repeated by the proper persons, the same spiritual results will ensue. Are we not required to regard the laying on of hands in ordination with a similar confidence that the same results will follow? We are not dependent in either case on express commands. It is enough for us to be assured of the mind of the Church.

8. Dr. Headlam's third argument for the Episcopal ordination is that it is "the right and proper custom," because "it combines in the best possible way the two essential elements of strength and elasticity."

Regarded as a personal opinion, there is, of course, on this matter nothing to be said. But it is one of those statements to which the Bishop's own words may be applied, that they are more convincing to those already convinced, but singularly ineffective when applied to outsiders. The most that can be said for it is that it is a matter on which opinions differ. A similar plea is often made by Roman controversialists for the Papacy with very similar results

The sentence in Dr. Headlam's discussion which one is anxious to stress is, that in the past the Episcopal principle " was looked upon as essential and of divine origin." Is it so certain after all that the past was mistaken?

9. It is clear that criticism of this kind on the Christian ministry involves the whole problem of the validity of the development of the Church, and of all that it contains.

It has been often noted that as the original Christian movement matured it developed several distinct characteristics more or less side by side. Dr. Moore, for example, Professor of Theology in Harvard,[1] sees in S. Clement's letter to the Corinthians the beginning of the claim of Apostolic character for the Christian ministry. In the same way, certain documents acquired authority because they were regarded as Apostolic. Just as there was an Apostolic ministry, so there was an Apostolic literature in the Canon of the New Testament. In the same way, again, there was matured a Creed, called forth by the same emergency, an Apostolic Faith. " And in principle all three of these things are appre-

[1] *The New Testament in the Christian Church*, 1904, pp. 243, 246.

hended by Christians as having been present from the beginning in provisions which the Apostles had made."

The Professor regards all three as deteriorations and departures from the simplicity of Jesus, and therefore to be regretted. But he quite appreciates the similarity of their character. They are the actual lines on which the religion matured.

Now what we have to face is, whether it is really tenable to rely with perfect confidence on the historic product of one of these lines of growth, while throwing discredit upon another. It is quite consistent to reject them all as departures from and contradictions to the primitive simplicity of the original. But is there any solid reasonableness in selecting one for regard at the expense of the rest?

10. There is, of course, the critical school which regards much of the development of the historic Church as acute secularisation, or intrusion of elements foreign to the Church's nature. The extent to which that theory is applied varies from one critic to another.

But it is very necessary indeed to ask whether after all the form into which the constitution of the Church universally matured is not in some way or other due to the genius of the religion. A suggestion of this kind is permissible quite apart from the question of providential direction, although to a religious mind it is not unnatural if it should lead to that idea. One cannot in this connection forget the memorable words accredited to Richard Hooker, who is acknowledged to be one of the greatest theologians of the Church of England: "Wherefore let us not fear to be herein bold and peremptory, that if anything in the Church's government, surely the first institution of bishops was

from heaven, was even of God, the Holy Ghost was the author of it." [1]

This question whether there has been any providential control in the development of the Church takes us far above the sphere of the critic, but it is one which haunts the religious mind. Is all this history of the Church purely human? Is it nothing else than the product of human energy and the conflict of human wills? Or is this extraordinary persistence of the Apostolic ministry the Divine doing? That question must be faced. The historical critic has his invaluable work, but the final decision is in a higher sphere than his.

[1] *Eccles. Polity*, VII. v.

CHAPTER IX

IF APOSTOLIC SUCCESSION IS NOT TRUE

THE defenders of the South Indian Scheme are busy with the attempt to throw discredit on the Apostolic Succession as unproved, or else to take for granted that it is not true. There are two ways in which they may be answered. One is the positive way: by producing the evidence in its behalf, the grounds in Scripture on which the doctrine is based, the historic development which confirms it, and the theological principles which are involved. The other is the negative way: by showing the consequences which follow if the Apostolic Succession is not true. Just as S. Paul suggested the consequences which follow if Christ be not risen, so the consequences may be suggested which follow if there is no Apostolic ministry.

The doctrine of Apostolic Succession is that the authority to minister, which was conferred upon the Apostles by Christ Himself, is transmitted down the centuries through Episcopal ordination. The doctrine is concerned essentially neither with methods of organising nor with forms of government nor with threefold, as opposed to twofold, ministries; but with authority originating in Christ and transmitted from ordainer to ordained.

What, then, if this Apostolic Succession is a dream? In that case the Apostolic ministry became extinct. It died with the death of S. John. Then the ministry

which derived its authority direct from Christ came to an end. In that case it was left to the Church to decide what should happen. The Church had to determine whether there should be any official ministry at all, and, if that problem was decided in the affirmative, what form the new ministry should take. There could be no Divine obligation to reproduce the same ministerial constitution everywhere. It was a case for local option. No Church could bind its successors. Each generation was free to revise or reverse the methods of its predecessors. There was no compelling reason why any particular form of ministry should be permanent, since God fulfils Himself in many ways, lest one good custom should corrupt the world.

It has been argued by an eminent Nonconformist, and quite logically, on the assumption that the Apostolic Succession is false, that the very fact that one particular form of ministry has continued for centuries is in itself abundant reason why we ought to have a change. Ultra-conservatism can have no place in a progressive community. A chief duty of a Church is to adapt itself to the requirements of the age. Moreover, if all spiritual authority is vested in the congregation, it follows that the congregation has the power to ordain. The Presbyterian challenges this. Where in Scripture, he asks, do we find the people ever attempting to ordain? Congregationalism must admit that we do not read in Scripture of any such procedure. True; but that was the time when the Apostles were alive. After the Apostles were dead there were no other ordainers left.

What, then, does ordination mean? Opinion is here divided. Some say it means that the Church is authorising a man to be its minister. Others lay all the

stress on the man's assurance that he has received a call from heaven. This call from heaven is restricted to no one form of organisation. That does not sound exactly conducive to unity. But if the call has come from heaven, it is not within the right of officials to forbid it. Congregational leaders insist that this call from heaven disregards all official lines, and comes to some Christian men as it came to Amos. Amos was no prophet, nor the son of a prophet. He belonged to no priestly or clerical family. But although he belonged to no privileged caste, and was not qualified by any official initiation, yet he was divinely commissioned to deliver the message of the Eternal. What was true of the ancient prophet, it is suggested, is also true of the prophet in Christian times.

That is to say, the Christian ministry is prophetic, not priestly. That was plainly maintained by a representative of the South India United Church at Lausanne. It was said that the Christian minister is a prophet and not a priest. He is like his Master; for it was argued that Christ was not a priest, but only a prophet. Viewed in this light, if the minister is a preacher and nothing else, it is perfectly consistent to maintain, and it is maintained very widely, that ordination is simply recognition by the congregation that a man possesses the religious qualities and prophetic gifts suited for a minister, and that as such he is set apart for the service of the Church.

It is clear, therefore, that the doctrines of the nature of the Church, and of the ministry, and of ordination, and of the Sacraments, are interdependent. They are parts of the same conception of Christianity. If the minister is not a priest, there is no consecration of the

Eucharistic Elements, and his ordination is to a prophetic function and not to a priestly, and ordination itself is principally recognition of his qualities.

If there is no such thing as Apostolic Succession, and there is no ministry transmitted originating in Christ, then it is difficult to see why one form of government, among the various methods which Christians have created, should be erected into an indispensable condition of reunion. So long as Episcopal ordination is recommended solely on the ground of practical utility, it is at least open to criticism, and by no means necessarily convincing. How can it be expected to be convincing to the great communions which regard all ordination as simply recognition of prophetic gifts?

Bishop Palmer has drawn a distinction between Episcopal and non-Episcopal ministers by calling the former the rule and the latter the exception. Whether that estimation will appeal to the Protestant communities we cannot say. They might fairly contend that the exceptions have become rather numerous and effective. They might even go so far as to question whether the rule was one to which the Christian religion was irrevocably committed for all time. If the Church is to exist for a hundred thousand years, and it may for aught we know to the contrary, the precedents of the past two thousand years look rather small in proportion. It is not enough to call Episcopacy the rule. The question is: Who is responsible for the rule? If it is only the Church, then the Church can modify its rule.

If Episcopacy is regarded simply as a form of government, there is much to be said against it, as well as in its behalf. It has been argued that its exclusiveness and prelatic tendencies have been the provocative reason for division. And while conceding that it

served some useful purpose during the immaturity of the Middle Ages, it does not follow that it is equally adapted to Christian progress in the modern world. Without the smallest disrespect, we may thank it for its services in the past without subjecting ourselves to its domination for the future. We may conduct it deferentially to the frontiers of Christendom and leave it in the ancient communions to which it belongs, and proceed to create for ourselves a system of government better suited for the world in which we actually live. Such procedure would be entirely consistent if the Apostolic Succession is a fiction.

It is true that, in South India, communities of Wesleyans, Congregationalists and Presbyterians are prepared to accept Episcopacy as a form of government, always with the express proviso that no doctrinal significance shall be attached. But it is also true that here in England the same communities display no such eagerness. And the reason is quite plain. Here in England they are familiar with what is to them the positively repellent language of the Preface to the Anglican Ordinal; the Anglican formula of priestly ordination; and what is worse, the form of sacerdotal absolution in the Visitation of the Sick. Confronted at close quarters with official pronouncements of that kind, they are not convinced by Evangelical attempts to explain the language away. They feel, and we respect them for feeling, that, so long as such official utterances remain unchanged, the Church which holds to them cannot be a congenial home for those who regard ordination as nothing more than recognition, the ministry as simply prophetic, and ordination itself as an optional and dispensable ceremony.

Serious attention should be given to the reflections

and arguments propounded at Lausanne by those who rejected the doctrine of Apostolic Succession. It was argued that each separate communion should fairly be left to decide for itself what form of organisation it prefers, and what it desires to do about ordaining its ministers. On Protestant principles that claim seems unanswerable. It was, however, added at Lausanne that a concession could be made by the non-Episcopal communions for the sake of union—a concession, be it observed, to preferences which they do not share. It was said that, after all, Episcopacy is only a form of Church government or Church organisation. Acceptance of it would only be consenting to admit Superintendents, like the Methodists in America, under the name of Bishops. As " a self-denying ordinance " the Episcopate might be accepted. But, of course, only on condition that no doctrine is attached.

And here a very significant question was raised. It was asked whether, in case a non-Episcopal communion, eager for reunion, and ready to make concessions to the more conservative-minded adherents of the Episcopate, were to confer on some of its ministers the title of bishop, the Episcopal Churches would be prepared to recognise their ministers as bishops. Can a Church which has no bishops create them? There lies the whole problem of the nature and meaning of Episcopacy. Methodism can create a superintendent. Why can it not create a bishop? Unless the Apostolic Succession is true, it will not be easy to give a convincing dogmatic refutation of that claim. The question is most significant. It illustrates exactly what external conformity to Episcopacy as a mere form of organisation means when regarded without any doctrinal basis.

Attention should be given to the remarks recently made by Principal Garvie from the Congregationalist standpoint with regard to Episcopal ordination. He recognises that "it must be admitted that the early origin, the long continuity, and the wide diffusion of the Episcopate make it an appropriate, nay, the most appropriate, organ for making manifest this universal character of the Christian ministry." But he expressly qualifies this by adding: "This is offered as a judgment, not of absolute spiritual, but of relative historical value." Exactly so. Episcopal ordination is respected as a fact largely prevalent in space and time; but not for any distinctive religious worth. Consequently Dr. Garvie concludes: "To restrict the function of ordination to the Episcopate would be, in my judgment, to obscure the truth that the ministry is from the whole Church." The truth is that, if there is no Apostolic Succession, the place historically assigned to the Episcopate in ordaining has been altogether misleading. Whatever supplementary functions the presbyters were understood to fulfil at the ordination of a priest, it was universally agreed that, in the absence of the Bishop, no man could ordain, and that the consecration of a Bishop could only be by those who themselves were in the Episcopate. But if Apostolic Succession is untrue, all these historic procedures are based on false conceptions, and there is no essential necessity for the Episcopate to become the only accepted ordainer in the Christian Church.

The advocates of the Episcopal system, while rejecting Apostolic Succession, are drawing conclusions which their premises do not really justify, and which therefore ought not logically to prove convincing.

CHAPTER X

RECOGNITION BY THE SPIRIT

WHEREVER the influence and working of the Holy Spirit exists its perception is a sign of grace on the part of the perceiver. It is painfully true that human narrowness, blindness or perversity may incapacitate us from detecting the Divine, although it presents Itself before us. It is one of the characteristics of our time that there is a readiness to see the influence of the Spirit where a previous age was more than ready to deny it. The bitterness of controversy has subsided to this extent. It has become a commonplace to say that ministries which do not possess the Episcopate "have been manifestly blessed and owned by the Holy Spirit as effective means of grace." That ministries of very different kinds have been recognised by the Spirit is a fact which must be whole-heartedly acknowledged. The only question is what this Divine recognition implies. Does it mean that every sort of ministry is equally an object of the Divine approval?

Before attempting to make reply, we must bear in mind how widely the Divine recognition of religious ministrations extends. It extends beyond all Episcopal, Presbyterian and Congregational ministries into communions which have no ministry at all, into communions which observe no Sacraments, and into communions which have no belief in our Lord's Divinity, nor in His redemptive power; but only in His

general religious instructions about the Father, His moral ideals and His personal sublimity. All these various communions, notwithstanding their momentous and fundamental differences, have manifested such real religious devotion, and produced such types of character, that it would be difficult to say they have not been recognised by the Spirit. But we cannot infer from this extensiveness of the Divine recognition that equal Divine approval rests on all the doctrines which these differing communions affirm. There is such a thing as Divine discrimination, and the Divine preference must be in favour of what is true. Where various communions contradict one another, the Spirit who blesses their labours must be blessing them so far as they are true, but cannot be regarded as endorsing their errors. Recognition by the Spirit does not imply indiscriminate approval of doctrinal contradictions.

These reflections also apply where communions seriously differ in their conceptions of the Church and of the ministry. It does not follow in the least that because Episcopal and non-Episcopal ministries have both been blessed by the Spirit, therefore the Spirit is completely indifferent which of the two prevails. If we understand aright the attitude of the great Protestant communions, they themselves do not place all religious groups on a level of spiritual equality. Presumably they would admit that the Salvation Army and the Society of Friends have been blessed by the Spirit; but apparently they refuse to classify these movements with the Presbyterian, the Congregational and the Baptist communions. They draw a clear distinction between recognition by the Spirit and approval of different ecclesiastical methods and constitutions.

If one communion maintains that the ministerial authority which our Lord conferred on His Apostles is inherited by the Episcopate, and that none but a Bishop has the power to ordain; while another communion maintains that ministerial authority is derived from the congregation which has the power to change, if it pleases, the whole type of ministry, and Apostolic Succession is dismissed as an idle dream; it is plain that the difference between these two communions is not confined to outward forms, but goes down into sharply contrasted and irreconcilable doctrines and principles. It is also plain that these antagonistic doctrines cannot both be true. Both these communions may be recognised by the Spirit, but that recognition cannot reconcile contradictions, nor express an equally Divine approval of both.

The fact is that the difference between existing communions goes down deeper than their conceptions of the ministry to their conceptions of the nature of the Church itself. There are communions which maintain that the Church is a supernatural institution, formed by Christ and indwelt by the Spirit, retaining self-identity down the ages in Creed and Sacrament and constitution. There are also communions which cordially reject the whole of this conception; and yet both types may be recognised by the Spirit.

All that we have any right to infer from the Divine recognition of conflicting Christian communions is that the Divine mercy utilises our human contradictions without approving them. The grace of God may act through very imperfect forms of human ministry, through methods which are often excellent in their intentions but yet quite mistaken. We are therefore

bound to insist that the fact of Divine recognition of imperfect creeds and rival ministries must not mislead us to infer an equal, undiscerning Divine approval of them all. When faced with the fact of conflicting creeds, we must try to ascertain which agrees with Apostolic principles; and the same necessity exists with regard to diverse ministries and doctrines about the nature and constitution of the Church.

Separation from the Episcopal constitution of the Church did not arise on the dogmatic ground that such ministry was essentially incompatible with the Gospel. It invariably arose on the practical ground that the separatists believed themselves compelled in conscience to disobey the erroneous injunctions of the traditional ministry. The substitution of Presbyterian ministries for Episcopal was originally defended as a practical necessity. The dogmatic defence of Presbyterianism as a ministerial principle came in afterwards. It was not the original reason for the separation.

The leaders of Protestantism in France in the seventeenth century are found persistently declaring that, if the French Reformed Churches have no Bishops, it is only because necessity has obliged them. The evidence proves that no communion at the Reformation abandoned the Apostolic Succession willingly, or under a dogmatic theory and a desire to restore a truer way; but under constraint, reluctantly, even apologetically, because they were unable to carry the Episcopate with them. As the American Professor Briggs, himself originally a Presbyterian, put it: " The disorders of the Reformation and the separation of the Bishops from the Churches of the Reformation left the National Churches in such an abnormal condition that the only

ordained ministry left to them were obliged to exercise all the functions of the ministry." Note the words "an abnormal condition."

When we face the fact that our holy religion was embodied in one historic institution for the first fifteen centuries, is it not a reasonable interpretation to say that this was the normal expression of the Christian principles? Is it not fair to say that the rise of the other forms and other ministries was largely due to unworthiness in the human agents of the historic Church? Is it not right to regard the modern ministries of the last four centuries, the communions with any official ministry, the isolated prophetic voices outside all organised religion, the revivalists and the sub-divisions which have been recognised by the Spirit, as supplementing the defects and deficiencies of the historic and immemorial original ministries, but not in any way as permanent substitutes, or eternal rivalries over against them? In many a case these modern ministries are survivals of obsolete disputes, designed to remedy defects which have long since disappeared.

The fact that various ministries of conflicting kinds have been manifestly blessed and owned by the Holy Spirit as effective means of grace should be acknowledged with a thankfulness not unmingled with profound humiliation. For it indicates what would never have happened had it not been for human imperfections and disorders on one side or on both. The right interpretation of it is that human perversities and ignorances have often been overruled, and that the Spirit has utilised what He did not approve. If the Divine method is ever out of ill to bring forth good, we must not allow the good which He has produced to

blind us to the errors which required it. The ultimate test of doctrines and of ministries—and ministries are inseparable from principles—is not whether they have been recognised and utilised by the Spirit, but simply whether they are those which the Spirit intended to prevail.

This subject of recognition by the Spirit has been recently pushed further by the former Bishop of Bombay. Dr. Palmer defends the admission of ministers who are episcopally ordained, and of ministers who are not so ordained, to celebrate the Eucharist in the United Church on the ground that both these types of ministry are manifestations of God's Will. The former being the rule and the latter the exception. He argues that God has manifested His Will with regard to ministers not episcopally ordained because He has actually made use of them as ministers of the Word and Sacraments. He contends that when these ministers who have not been episcopally ordained become united in the same Church with the Episcopal, we ought to acknowledge them equally as qualified alike to celebrate the Eucharist.

This line of argument is surely quite misleading. In what sense are the ministry of priests and the ministry of those who are not priests manifestations of God's Will? The Catholic belief is that the Episcopate is part of the actual original constitution of the Church, and in our Lord's intention designed to be the only way by which the authority to minister as a priest should be conferred. Ideally that original constitution ought never to have been disowned. No other ministerial principle ought ever to have been by Christians set in place of the Apostolic ministry.

The Catholic interpretation of all departures from the immemorial constitution of the Church is that sometimes, through the unworthiness of priests and bishops, the Divine origination of the Apostolic ministry was obscured and discredited. At other times faith in the Church's nature was lost. The responsibility of secession and substituted ministries must be shared in whatever degree between those who remained and those who withdrew. The exigencies of separation from the historic ministry compelled the separated to do what they could without it. Thus other principles of ministerial ordination arose. These modern methods of ministration have been divinely utilised and made subservient to God's Will. In that restricted sense they are approved and blessed. But we dare not say, since loyalty to the original constitution of the Church does not permit us to say, that they are manifestations of God's Will in the same sense as the ministerial constitution of the historic Church. It is not only the fact of separation which makes the difference between those who are priests and those who are not. The union of an Episcopal and a non-Episcopal communion does not convert a minister into a priest. No act of union can make conflicting principles of ministry equivalents. And that the Divine Will has utilised supplementary ministrations outside the Episcopal constitution does not justify the assumption that God approves the coexistence of both ministries within a Church whose ministry is essentially Apostolic. It is difficult to believe that any of the ancient communions in Christendom would consent that any minister who is not a priest should unite with, and be invited to consecrate the Sacrament, on the ground that his work

was blessed before he joined them. The manifestation of God's Will is surely shown more clearly and conclusively in the ministerial principles by which Christendom as a whole in space and time has been directed, than in cases which Bishop Palmer himself describes as the exceptions. It is quite impossible to place exceptions on a level of identity with the rule.

Exceptional manifestations of God's Will only show that God is not restricted to the regulations and principles which He has imposed upon His Church. He can impart His gifts when, and where, and how He pleases, irrespective of the Church itself. As Augustine said, the waters of Paradise flow beyond its limits. But the Church is not authorised to admit any other ministerial principle than that which it has hitherto represented. It is really not within the rights of a Church which has hitherto always depended upon priests for its Eucharistic Consecration to sanction any departure from that tradition. That is, so far as the Episcopal Church is concerned, undeniable.

Bishop Palmer presses still further his argument from exceptional cases. He quotes Professor Cuthbert Turner's agreement with Tertullian that, in circumstances of necessity and absence of the proper ministers, a layman may celebrate the Eucharist. Dr. Palmer accordingly infers that if this is true, a minister is not essential to the validity of the Eucharist. Tertullian's statement seems to me quite ambiguous. In any case it was written after he had left the Church. As to the question whether in circumstances of necessity a layman may consecrate the Eucharist, it is clearly an opinion of theologians, an opinion on which perhaps either side can be legitimately adopted. But it is certainly not a

dogma to which the Chuch is committed. And therefore any conclusion about it can only have such value as its advocates can confer. It is not safe to build a theological principle, committing the whole Church, on a foundation which is purely debatable, and on which the Church has never pronounced. It is far too speculative to be a reasonable guide. We can, if we are so disposed, speculate what the Church ought to do if a virulent anti-Episcopal microbe were to attack the universal Episcopate and obliterate the order altogether. We may ask whether in such circumstances the Church could recreate the Episcopate, or any other question we may please. It might be argued that the Church could not transmit what had ceased. It could create something new, but not continue the old. It might be said that any layman might consecrate the Eucharist. Or it might be said that since the Divinely constituted ministry had been providentially permitted to expire, it was no longer possible to fulfil the Divine conditions, and therefore the Eucharist must cease. That solution would be entirely satisfactory to that very exemplary religious institution the Society of Friends. Nor would it prove seriously disturbing in some other Christian communities. Does not the Church of England suggest what it calls Spiritual Communion where the normal conditions of Sacramental observance cannot be observed? The Divine goodness, we all agree, is not restricted to His ordinary directions. Why then attempt to replace what we cannot reproduce? By all means have something else. It appears to us that the inference drawn from exceptional cases may logically lead far further and far otherwise than Dr. Palmer would desire. It is always dangerous to

generalise from exceptional cases and speculative possibilities.

Dr. Palmer says that "the rule which confines the ministration of the Eucharist to Bishops and priests is a rule of order, designed to secure due reverence in the Sacrament and the unity of the Church." But surely the priesthood means much more than this—at least for those who believe in Apostolic Succession. Bishop Palmer himself, at the Conference at Lausanne, raised the question, What happens in Ordination? He said that "the Churches which preserved the traditional form of the ministry of Holy Orders answer: it is Christ who consecrates or ordains, and in consecration or ordination He, using the Bishop as His mouthpiece, makes a man a Bishop or a priest." He assured the Conference that he believed the traditional method to be Divine. He said, "I recognise to the full the devotion and spiritual power of some Congregational ministers. But God blesses faithful attempts to serve Him in spite of our mistakes, and I cannot but think that the Independent theory of ministry is a mistake." He regarded Episcopal commission as that which made a man a priest. He reminded the Conference that "in the East, men value institutions for what they mean—in the West for what they effect"; adding that "there is a vital truth in the Eastern view." Now if we put all this together which the Bishop maintained at Lausanne, the conclusions which irresistibly follow are that confining the ministration of the Eucharist to a priest is vastly more than a device for securing reverence in the Sacrament: it is based on the principle that Christ's authority has thereby been given. If that principle is true, how can Christians be justified in departing from

it, or in substituting another principle in its place? Moreover, the distinction between valuing institutions for what they represent, and valuing them for what they effect, is, as Dr. Palmer truly says, a characteristic difference between the thoughtful Eastern mind and the practical Western. And there is a very real importance in the Eastern view. We are not to judge a ministry merely by its practical effects, but also by the principles which it signifies. And regarded in this light it will not do to say that all these conflicting systems have been utilised by the Spirit. For, as Dr. Palmer expressly said, God blesses faithful attempts to serve Him, in spite of our mistakes, which is precisely the fact whose reality we have tried to maintain.

CHAPTER XI

APOSTOLATE AND EPISCOPATE

A MODERN theory about the relation between the Apostolate and the Episcopate is that the former died out and was replaced by the latter. It is recognised that the former derived its authority from Christ, but it is asserted that the latter derives its authority from the congregation.

The only remedy in this conflict on principles about the ministry is to revert to the Apostolic originals, and to see how they were interpreted in the principles and practices of Christendom at large.

In discussing this subject we are at any rate able to begin with something agreed. The Apostolic ministry was derived direct from Christ. The Apostles were not only endowed by our Lord with authority to minister, but also with authority to confer that ministry upon others. Accordingly, as we have already seen, there came into existence ordainers who had received authority to ordain from the Apostles. Thus the principle of Apostolic Succession, in the sense of direct transmission of ministerial authority through the Apostles from Christ, appears already within the Apostolic Church. This type of Apostolically commissioned ministry was imposed upon local Churches in the Apostolic age. As the eminent Congregationalist, Principal Forsyth, wrote in words already quoted, " the local Churches were ruled in their life and limited in

their freedom by men whom they did not elect or control." What existed then was a ministry in the local Churches always under the unifying control of the Apostolate.

The Bishop or Presbyter of the Apostolic régime was subordinate to the Apostles. In fact, he was an Apostolic creation. He came into existence through reception of commission and ordination from the Apostles. He was not created by the congregation, but taken up by the Apostles into ministerial function, and made a partial sharer in the Apostolic authority.

The original form of the Church was a social organisation with a differentiated unity caused by the action and authority of Christ.

Now the question which has to be faced is, What became of this original with its Christ-appointed ministry and Sacraments? When the Church passed from the Apostolic period to the subsequent age, did it retain its constitutional identity? This Society with sacraments and ministry both alike owing their origin to Christ, this Society in which God set Apostles at the head, this Divinely differentiated unity—did it change its character? Was the original ministerial principle of ordination conferred by the Apostles terminated and replaced by a different principle of authority conferred by the congregation?

The strong presumption surely is that this supernaturally differentiated institution was not created for one generation alone, but designed to endure as long as the world should last. The Apostolic ministry was just as much a creation of Christ as the Sacraments. What reason is there to assume that the one was permanent and the other temporary? If Christ gave the Apostles

authority to ordain, who transferred that authority to the congregation? There is certainly no Scripture proof, in fact no trace whatever, that the congregation received that power. A change of that kind would mean that the Church, instead of expanding by a natural development on the basis of its original constitution, departed from the principles in which it was created. A Church in which ministerial authority is conferred by the congregation is not the same Church as one in which ministerial authority was conferred by Christ and transmitted by the Apostles.

Let us attempt by an effort of historical imagination to represent the condition of the ministry at the close of the Apostolic age. The time arrived when nearly all the original Apostles were gone. In the inevitable order of nature it would not be long before not a solitary Apostle would be left. What was to happen then? We may illustrate by what happened in other ages. When the English Church during the Commonwealth was an exile in France, the Bishops grew old and few, until at last only one or two survived in extreme age and infirmity; grave apprehension filled its members that the ministry would become extinct. They tell us that their heart sank within them when they contemplated the prospect.

Add another illustration. When the original group of ministers and leaders in the Irvingite communion was reduced to one solitary survivor, profound anxiety settled down on the whole Society. What was to be done when the last of the originals was dead? This anxiety was not only natural, it was inevitable when a total change of constitution required to be faced.

Now it is a very obvious fact that in the Apostolic

Church there is not the smallest trace of anxiety concerning the continuance of the authorised ministry. There is manifestly no idea that anything essential to the constitution of the Church or to the continuance of the Apostolic ministry depended on the vitality of S. John. Robert Browning finely represents the dying S. John as apprehensive of the time when no one would be left on earth who saw with his eyes the Word of Life. But the Church at the close of the Apostolic age was not apprehensive of a time when the Apostolic ministry would cease, and not a man ordained by them would survive to transmit that ministry. There is no suggestion of any idea that the ministry instituted by Christ and conferred by His Apostles was to be replaced by a ministry authorised and conferred by the congregation. The continuance of the Apostolic ministry had been provided for. A considerable number of clergy remained who received their ordination from the Apostles. There were, as the New Testament proves, some on whom the Apostles had conferred not only authority to minister, but also authority to ordain. These men who survived their ordainers were surely ready to continue their Apostolically-authorised ministrations after the Apostles were gone. The famous passage in the Epistle of S. Clement, written before the first century was closed, lays down as an accepted principle that God sent Christ, Christ sent the Apostles, and the Apostles sent those who should minister after them. "And our Apostles knew," writes S. Clement, "that there would be strife over the name of the Bishop's office. For this cause, therefore, having received complete foreknowledge, they appointed the aforesaid persons, and afterwards they provided a

continuance, that if these should fall asleep, other approved men should succeed to their ministration." [1] This ministerial principle already existed in the first century in Rome, and S. Clement clearly takes for granted that it existed also in Corinth. And this principle of mission derived from Christ through the Apostles renders the existence of a different constitution beside the Episcopate unthinkable.

"Jesus Christ was sent from God, the Apostles from Jesus Christ, the first presbyters and deacons from the Apostles. And it made no difference if these first holders of office were dead, and the Apostles who had appointed them were dead also; since the Apostles themselves, foreseeing that the ministry would become a subject of controversy, had made the requisite provision for the continuation of the work. After the original ordainers and the original ordained, there would be other men to be proved and ordained to the ministry, other men of note to prove and ordain them. And the whole community would express its assent to each ordination, so that no element should be lacking to ensure its complete and permanent validity." [2]

When we say that the Apostolate passed on into the Episcopate it is, of course, necessary to distinguish. There were certain characteristics in the ministry of the Apostles which were personal and could not be transmitted. Their direct experience of the life of the Son of Man, their individual witness to the Resurrection, their testimony that they had seen Him after He rose from the dead, could not be handed on to the ministry

[1] Ch. 44.
[2] Turner in *Early History of Church and Ministry*, pp. 110–11.

of a subsequent generation. But these individual and personal experiences were only a part of the Apostolic ministry. The Apostolic ministry included other characteristics than these. They had an authority to teach, to make disciples, to confer the Holy Spirit, to impart to others ministerial powers, to bring into being officials whom they could direct to feed the Church of God, over which the Holy Spirit had made them Bishops. This authority was not personal, but official. And this could unquestionably be transferred. And this authority to minister was transmitted.

It has often been pointed out that the phrase "Apostolic Succession" represented in primitive Christendom two distinct ideas. The one idea which it represented was that a Bishop assumed a vacant chief pastor's place, occupied an office which his predecessor had left. In other words, he was one in a chronological series, and as such exercised the same function and continued the same faith and tradition. The other idea which Apostolic Succession represented was that a Bishop received his consecration from one who had authority to transmit it. These two ideas, then, are, respectively, that a Bishop occupies his predecessor's place, the other that he acquires his ministry from his ordainer. The former is chronological, the latter theological. The former represents his position in the local Church. The latter is the relation of ordainer to ordained.

Now it need be no surprise that some writers lay stress on one of these two ideas and some upon the other. That is natural and explicable by requirements of the time. The important thing to remember is that while these two ideas are separable in theory, they were inseparable in practice. For succession to an Episcopal

place, Episcopal ordination has been historically indispensable. When we read the list of the series of Bishops in any local Church of the early centuries we contemplate Apostolic Succession in the sense of consecutive occupants of a position. But it is really impossible to conceive that some of the members in that series were episcopally consecrated and some were not. Who, for instance, could credit that in the list of the predecessors and successors of S. Ignatius of Antioch some received their authority from the Apostles and some from the congregation? The succession is not only a consecutive series of officials; it is a series of officials whose office and ordination are the same. It is a succession in which identity of ministerial principles is implied.

It is significant that we find these two ideas of ministerial succession combined as early as Tertullian, about A.D. 200. He challenges the Churches to unfold the roll of their Bishops, in due succession from the beginning, in such a manner that their existing Bishop "shall be able to show for his ordainer and predecessor some one of the Apostles, or of Apostolic men." [1] Remark ordainer and predecessor. The Bishop is not merely the occupant of a place: he is also the recipient of an identical ministry.

Apostolic Succession is not only presiding in a predecessor's place, but also being qualified for that presiding by being of the same kind of ministry, and thereby possessing the same authority. It was never supposed that a layman could succeed a Bishop, or indeed that any man could succeed unless his consecration was Episcopal. Unless that was the case he

[1] *De Præscriptione*, Chap. XXXII.

certainly would not be recognised as the lawful authority by other local Churches.

Thus the Episcopate took the place and discharged the functions of the Apostolate. There is no trace of any consciousness in the mind of the Primitive Church that there had been any fundamental change of ministerial principle. The relation conceived to exist between the Apostolate and the Episcopate is intimate and vital. The latter is regarded as the continuance of the former.

There is the further most impressive fact that all the local Churches of Christendom developed into the same ministerial system with the same ministerial principles. Familiar, undeniable and commonplace as this fact is, it can hardly be too carefully considered. It is a fact which requires explaining, and has often caused perplexity to the critics. Why should the Christian ministry have developed invariably into the same type?

Tertullian's well-known argument that identity of doctrine in the different communities certifies its truth has important bearing on our subject. His argument is that if the Creed of the various local Churches is the same, we may rest secure that they are right. Identity of product means identity of cause. "Is it likely," he asks, "that so many Churches, and they so great, should have gone astray into one and the same faith? No casualty distributed among many men issues in one and the same result. Error of doctrine in the Churches must necessarily have produced various issues." [1] When the Creed into which the various Churches have matured is everywhere the same, it is safe to infer that

[1] *De Præscriptione*, Chap. XXVIII.

this Creed is the genuine product of the religion which they profess.

This is a powerful argument, and weighs greatly with many minds to this day. It weighs deservedly. The interpretation which Churches distant from each other and speaking in many languages have placed down the centuries on the Person of Christ commends itself in virtue of their agreement. This must be the legitimate product of the genius of the Christian Religion. Otherwise what can we trust? And how could they all concur in what is contrary to the Apostolic principles?

Tertullian's argument is not only applicable to the Faith. It has an obvious bearing on the constitutional development of the Church. The argument in this case will be based on the fact that every local Church in Christendom developed into precisely the same ministerial type, with the same function and the same principles. This fact is profoundly remarkable. How can this striking identity be explained? It is not reasonable to say that it is an universal departure from Apostolic procedure and intentions. For if it were a departure it is inconceivable that every Church should have developed into the same results. There must have been a number of varieties. But this is exactly what we do not find. What else can be reasonably inferred than that there is something in the genius of the religion which led to this identity of ministerial constitution? Something or other imposed it on the Church.

Moreover, there is no room in face of these facts for the theory that ministerial authority is derived from the congregation. If that doctrine had been the principle accepted as soon as the Apostles were all dead, it is inconceivable that it should have grown into the doctrine

of Apostolic Succession, which is its exact contradiction. It is impossible that the doctrine of authority derived from the congregation should have been entirely swept away and replaced for many centuries by the doctrine of authority derived from the Apostles.

The best thing one can do here is to summarise the remarkable Essay of Professor Cuthbert Turner on the early development of the ministry.[1]

The original ministry of the Church was clearly twofold. There was the *local* ministry of bishops, priests, elders and deacons. There was also the *general* ministry of Apostles, prophets and teachers. Harnack holds that the superiors of the individual community owe the high position which they finally attained mainly to the circumstance that the most important functions of the ministers of the Church at large (the Apostles, prophets and teachers) in course of time, as these died out or lost their significance, passed over to them.

Turner points out with regard to the earliest Christian ministry—(1) That the principle of mission runs through the whole conception of office in the New Testament (Acts v. 4–5; S. John xvii. 18; Rom. x. 15). Through the Apostles alone came the gift of the Holy Ghost, conveyed by the laying-on of hands: they, or those commissioned by them, appointed, or ratified the appointment of, even the local officials of each infant community.

(2) That these holders of office constituted a hierarchy from the earliest times, *i.e.* that there existed gradations of order and ministry and a contrast between the ministers thus graded and the rest. On 1 Cor. xii.

[1] *Studies in Early Church History* (1912), pp. 9 ff.

28, Turner observes, " If this verse had run, ' God hath placed some in the Church, first bishops, secondarily priests, thirdly deacons, next readers,' and so on, its hierarchical character would scarcely have been denied; it does not disappear because the offices mentioned are not the same as those of a later period of the Church."

(3) That the primitive ministry existed in two types, the local and the general, and that in process of time the local was substituted for the general ministry. The only ministry at the very earliest times was that of Apostles, prophets and teachers. The ministry which exclusively came to prevail was that of bishops, presbyters and deacons. The former was missionary, the latter stationary. The moment the Church began to realise its world-wide mission, the missionary ministry seemed the one thing needful. But as city after city began to possess a Christian community, the local stationary ministry came in the second century to be the only type.

(4) When did the transition from the ministry of Apostles to the ministry of Bishops begin? The Apostles and prophets are in the earliest age the two supreme orders of the Christian ministry (Ephes. ii. 20). But this ministry gradually disappears. What now exists is a ministry of bishops, presbyters and deacons. Professor Turner maintains that " it would not be natural to find that there should be one period when the Church possessed a hierarchy of one set of offices, and a second period when others were in their places, and an interval in between during which the Church was not officered at all. And in fact, even before the first moment at which the original orders begin to recede

into the background, long ere the Apostolic age had closed, the importance of the local ministry of bishops and presbyters commences to assert itself; and it was only as these gained prominence year by year, and could assume the unfettered leadership of the Christian societies, that the elder offices could silently and unnoticed die away." Long before the date of Ephesians (iv. 11) " the Church of Jerusalem had been governed by S. James and the presbyters under the eyes of the Apostles themselves."

(5) The development by which the earlier system of ministry sank into insignificance and the latter rose into prominence was one which, according to Professor Turner, " was not only practically complete by the year A.D. 150, but can be traced in germ nearly a hundred years before, was in full activity by the end of the first century, and was therefore, we may presume, sanctioned at least in principle by the Apostles themselves." Professor Turner goes on to call attention to what is so profoundly impressive in the transition from Apostolate to Episcopate, that it took place without controversy and without disturbance, speedily and universally. " Even under Apostolic authority all this would be scarcely likely to have taken place with such rapidity, and still more with such absence of friction, had the process been an absolute reversal of one set of conditions in favour of another and wholly distinct organisation, without the intervention of any intermediate stages which should more or less veil the significance of the revolution which was at work. But an absolute reversal is just what it was not. On the contrary, the evidence shows us that on both sides influences were in play contributing to bridge over the

gulf of difference, and to render the transition easy from the one form to the other. The general ministry tends to localise itself; the local ministry tends to assume some of the characteristics of the general. In a word, the tendency was rather to merge than to replace." For example, S. Philip is definitely associated with Hierapolis and S. John with Ephesus. "And just as on the one hand the earlier system thus abandoned its most patent differentiation, so on the other such of its functions and characteristics as were not part either of its wandering commission, or of the extraordinary and temporary endowment of the Church's infancy, were not conceived of as lost simply because the orders to which they belonged seemed to have disappeared. Rather, the Apostolic and the prophetic character were still asserted to be part and parcel for all time of the divine equipment of Christianity." Thus, in the end, the higher ministry merged itself in the lower, and thereby transformed the lower, so that the authority which was inherent in the higher became also characteristic of the lower.

(6) The conclusion of Professor Turner's masterly analysis is that the Bishop of the Ignatian Letters, for example, that is, the Bishop in the sense of the historic Church, is connected with two lines of ancestry. He is, in the name that he possesses, the legitimate descendant of the primitive Presbyter or Bishop of the local congregation. He is at the same time the legitimate descendant of the Apostles because he is endowed with special Apostolic functions which differentiate him as the embodiment of the original authority of an Apostle.

CHAPTER XII

THE AUTHORITY OF A LAMBETH CONFERENCE

FREQUENT reference has been made of late, both in letters and speeches, to the Lambeth Conference. Quite recently certain proposals contained in the South Indian Scheme of Reunion were supported by appeal to an opinion expressed in the Lambeth Conference of 1920. And numbers of people are looking forward, whether hopefully or otherwise, to the course which the Lambeth Conference may adopt when it assembles in 1930.

These references to the periodical discussions of the Bishops of the Anglican Communion give great practical importance to the question, What authority does a Lambeth Conference possess? This is a question which it is urgently necessary to consider; for it is dangerous to appeal to an Assembly's resolutions without having a clear conception of the nature of its authority.

Looking, then, into the history of the Lambeth Conference, to ascertain the intentions of its originators, we find the Archbishop of Canterbury (Longley) who presided over the first of these gatherings, held in 1867, pronounced that "it had never been contemplated" that the Lambeth Conference should assume the functions of a General Synod of all the Churches which were in communion with the Church of England. We find that this newly-created Lambeth Conference, like Tennyson's Infant new to earth and

sky, entered on a period of interesting self-consciousness. It began to wonder what it was, and in what relation it stood to the synodical constitution of the Church.

This was no mere speculative question. For there was Colenso and the troubles of Natal. And Colenso's words, as Browning said, had weight. So the first Lambeth Conference talked of many things. It talked about the Synod of a Diocese. It advanced to reflections on the Synod of a Province. It even dreamed of something larger and wider: possibly even a Patriarchate. But here reflections paused. Was there, or was there not, beyond the Synod of the Diocese and the Synod of the Province, or beyond even a National Synod, "a higher Synod of the Anglican Communion"? This subject proved perplexing. The difficulties in the way of any higher Synodical constitution were obvious. The separate Churches which compose the Anglican Communion "are more or less free to act independently." In certain cases their constitution is fixed, not only by ancient ecclesiastical law and usages, but also by their relation to the State. It was therefore plain that in existing circumstances "no Assembly that might be convened would be competent to enact Canons of binding ecclesiastical authority on these different bodies, or to frame definitions of faith which it would be obligatory on the Churches of the Anglican Communion to accept."

And therefore it was necessary to avoid all terms respecting the Lambeth Conference which might imply an authority of a Synodical or constitutional nature. But it might safely be called a Congress, if so they pleased. Accordingly, the Conference was recom-

mended by its advisers to define its place in Christendom in the following cautious and carefully chosen terms:

> "Its decisions could only possess the authority which might be derived from the moral weight of such united counsels and judgments, and from the voluntary acceptance of its conclusions by any of the Churches there represented."

This earliest of the Conferences at Lambeth put forth a resolution that in their opinion "unity of Faith and Discipline will be best maintained among the several branches of the Anglican Communion by due and canonical subordination of the Synods of the several branches to the higher authority of a Synod or Synods above them." But what the Synods are which stand above the Synods of the separate Churches of the Anglican Communion is exactly what the Lambeth Conference did not define. Presumably it could only refer to Synods of the Universal Church. For the Conference spoke of unity of faith and discipline being maintained by due and canonical subordination of local Churches to authority above them; which is precisely the kind of authority which the Lambeth Conference has never presumed itself to be. No Lambeth Conference has ever ventured to claim that canonical subordination was due to it.

No resolution passed by the Lambeth Conference can have anything more than the authority derived from the moral weight of its united counsellors. Its authority for any separate Church in the Anglican Communion must depend on the voluntary acceptance of its resolutions by the particular separate Church. It is, there-

fore, obvious that no individual can be justified in acting on a resolution of the Lambeth Conference unless and until that resolution has been accepted by the local Church of which that individual is a member. Any authority which the Lambeth Conference may possess is moral; it is not synodical or constitutional. The constitutional authority in each separate Church rests with that Church's Synods—and with the Synods of the Universal Church.

The Lambeth Conference stands entirely apart from Synods which possess canonical authority. Bishop Gore has recently reminded us that "the Lambeth Conference is purely a consultative body, and has no authority over anyone, however often it is spoken of as if it had."

Quite consistently with this fact, that the Lambeth Conference stands outside the Synodical constitution of Christendom, is the line frankly adopted in its subsequent meetings. Archbishop Tait, at the second Lambeth Conference in 1878, said that there was no intention whatever on the part of anybody to gather together the Bishops of the Anglican Communion "for the sake of defining any matter of doctrine"; also that there was "no intention whatever at any such gathering that questions of doctrine should be submitted for interpretation in any future Lambeth Conference any more than they were at any previous Lambeth Conference."

Archbishop Benson, opening the Lambeth Conference in 1888, declared that the Conference was "in no sense a Synod, and not adapted, or competent, or within its powers, if it should attempt to make binding decisions on doctrine or discipline."

At the same time, while a Lambeth Conference is not part of the synodical constitution of the Church, has no canonical authority, and is binding on no local Church whatever, unless that Church officially consents to receive its resolutions, it is none the less a fact that such Conferences must possess very considerable weight and influence. It was a Tractarian (Dean Lake of Durham) who condemned a certain proposal on the ground that it was "inconsistent with the principles of the Lambeth Conference." It was no less a person than that doughty champion of Catholicism, Bishop Gray of Capetown, who characterised a Lambeth Conference as "this most important gathering, whose conclusions are destined to exercise so great an influence on the whole future of the Churches of our communion."

Nor can the fact be overlooked that the Church in India has resolved to hear the opinion of the Lambeth Conference before coming to any decision on the South Indian Reunion Scheme. The Lambeth Conference will be asked whether there are any points in the South Indian Scheme which, if carried into effect, would justify the Churches of the Anglican Communion in breaking off communion with the Church in South India. That, indeed, is a highly critical use of the Lambeth Conference. Whatever reply the Conference might give would be only an opinion on which the separate Churches might completely differ. No resolution which that Conference could pass could have authority over the independent judgment of each separate Church of the Anglican Communion.

Various public statements made recently concerning the value of a Lambeth Conference show plainly the

need of clearly defining its nature, its function and its authority. The following statement by a very distinguished writer may be taken as an example.

The writer says, " If, as is true, the Lambeth Conference is only a meeting of Bishops, surely a meeting of Bishops of the Anglican Communion is very little short of a Council of the Anglican Communion."

On the contrary, one would have thought that such a meeting of Bishops is very far short indeed of being a Council. A Council is part of the Church's constitution. It possesses a definite authority over the portion of the Church to which it is related. A Provincial Council, for example, has the right to require the obedience of the Province to its directions. It could only be in a very exceptional and abnormal case that any part of the Province would have any excuse for refusing submission to the practical resolution of the Council. But it is necessary to reiterate that the case of the Lambeth Conference is entirely different. It has no binding authority whatever over the various Churches whose Bishops attend its consultations. It is merely advisory. If in the present case the Lambeth Conference were to allow that ministers who are not episcopally ordained might celebrate the Eucharist in the same communion with priests, and the Church in South Africa or the Church in Zanzibar were to repudiate that decision, they would be indisputably within their rights and entirely justified in their rejection. It stands to reason that a Conference which is only consultative, and of whose decisions the various Churches are independent, is a very different thing indeed from a Council which posessses constitutional authority and has the right to be obeyed.

But the influence which a Conference may exert, and the influence to which it has a right, are not necessarily the same. And in a public atmosphere like our own, where the constitutional principles of the Church are often imperfectly understood, or seriously distorted, the glamour of numbers may have an effect out of all proportion to its real authority. It is therefore of the utmost importance that public opinion should appreciate what the value of resolutions reached in a Lambeth Conference actually is.

CHAPTER XIII

THE SOUTH INDIAN PROPOSALS AND THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

THE central distinction of the South Indian Scheme is its proposal to combine within the same Church two different types of ministry. This proposal concerns very deeply every Episcopal Communion. It forces itself on the immediate attention of the Church of England, because this proposal is to be brought before the Lambeth Conference. For Anglo-Catholics the proposal is simply momentous, since they feel compelled in conscience to decline to receive the Sacrament from any minister but a priest. They feel also that their allegiance to the Church of England would be imperilled if this method of combining Episcopal and non-Episcopal ministries were accepted by the English Church. They have been seriously taken to task for their attitude. The criticisms against them could hardly be more clearly and forcibly expressed than in the following quotation.

"I have seen it stated by certain persons that if this or that is done which they disapprove of, they will have to sever their connection with the Church of England. Of course they have a right to do that if they like, but let them be quite clear what their action is: it is sheer Protestantism. They claim to be Catholics, but the full meaning of a Catholic is that he accepts the judgment of his Church as opposed to his own individual

judgment. If there were a universal Church able to speak with a living voice, he would accept that judgment. If the Church he belongs to, through its proper constituted authority, expresses its judgment, that judgment ought to have a strong moral weight with him. To set his own judgment, or that of any unconstitutional committee, or clique, against it is just simply Protestantism, and it is the method that has always led to schism. . . . We must accept the deliberate judgments of our Church through its constituted authorities; and if, as is true, the Lambeth Conference is only a meeting of Bishops, surely a meeting of Bishops of the Anglican Communion is very little short of a Council of the Anglican Communion. And in any case, although the modern Anglo-Catholic seems to have forgotten it, the voice of the united Episcopate has always been the strongest authority in the Christian Church."[1]

This criticism does not accurately represent the case which it opposes. The difficulty which would confront an Anglo-Catholic, if the Church of England were officially to consent that a minister who is not a priest should consecrate the Eucharist, is that the local Church would thereby disown the principles of the world-wide Church. And the ground of Anglo-Catholic allegiance to the Church of England depends on the belief that this section of the Church retains officially inviolate the Faith and Constitution of the world-wide Church.

The allegiance of a Catholic is primarily to the Universal Church, and to the local as a faithful representation of the Universal. The individual cannot accept the judgment of the local Church if he is con-

[1] *The Guardian*, October 4, 1929.

scientiously convinced that that judgment is contrary to the mind of the Universal Church.

The criticism which has just been quoted says that if there were a Universal Church able to speak with a living voice the Anglo-Catholic would accept that judgment. Exactly, and the Anglo-Catholic claims that, although the external unity of the Church is interrupted, and the universal Church is not able to speak collectively with a living voice, yet the mind of the Universal Church is unmistakably proved in the general consent of East and West down all the centuries. This consent is expressed in their practice, and in the principles which that practice involves.

In the particular instance of the ministry we are not left in the dark, or in the least uncertainty, what the mind of the Universal Church really is. It is therefore quite superfluous to say that if there were a Universal Church able to speak with a living voice, a Catholic would accept its judgment. In the case of the ministry the evidence of the Universal Church's mind is so clear that there is no need for us to wait until it is synodically expressed. It is true that the divided state of the Church does to a serious extent disorganise and impair the Church's power of collective self-expression; but that powerlessness to secure universal Synodical expression does not prevent the general mind of the Universal Church from being easily ascertainable in matters which concern its constitution and its ministry. In fact it is quite difficult not to see what the historic Church has really thought and performed on the subject of Ordination and Priesthood.

The case is plainly this. On the one side there is the mind of the Church Universal as shown in its exclusive

adherence to priestly ministrations and its acute sensitiveness against the slightest deviation from the same; its hesitation to acknowledge a ministry which bore the name of priest if any uncertainty arose whether the name represented the real and genuine type. We know how the Church of Engand has been compelled in self-defence to explain its Orders in reply alike to the East and to the West. On the other side, there is the conclusion of a number of modern critics who question the whole principle of Apostolic Succession, on the ground that they are unable to harmonise that principle with the varieties which they discover in the ministerial conditions of the Primitive Church.

Thus, on the one side, there is the principle maintained persistently in space and time by the Universal Church as an historic institution, and on the other there is the contrary theory of certain modern critics; numerous, no doubt, but not by any means, of course, the theory of them all. In fact, the principle of Apostolic Succession has distinguished advocates as well as rejectors.

Now, without attempting here to express any opinion as to the validity of the critical conclusions, what cannot be contested is that the Universal Church has not therefore changed its mind. No official decision anywhere among the great ancient communions in Christendom has repudiated its immemorial belief in Apostolic Succession. No such deference has been shown to the opinion of these modern critics. On the contrary, in the East at any rate, official views have reaffirmed the ancient principle, and reaffirmed it without the slightest tinge of compromise or vacillation.

It is a very serious question whether the critical

acumen and original conclusions of the last half-century possess such certainty and finality that the historic Church is required to forsake its immemorial ministerial principle in order to bring itself into harmony with this asserted new knowledge. Critical opinion itself is divided. There is at least the utmost need for caution and delay. That one part of the historic Church, the Church of England for instance, should, without waiting either for East or West, commit itself to a ministerial theory which contradicts its own practice, and would inevitably alienate it more completely from the other parts of the same historic Church, is a procedure which neither wisdom nor prudence encourages. It is surely a procedure which no Catholic can endorse.

Even if—which many of us think is by no means proved—even if the conclusions of the modern critics were largely correct, it is still reasonable to maintain that the Church must in the nature of things always be behind the times. It cannot keep pace with every new discovery; for the simple reason that every novel theory must take time to be tested, and weighed, and tried, and experience shows that new discoveries do not invariably survive. They sometimes grow so strangely modified by further reflection that in their altered forms their own orginators would scarcely know them.

The history of the English Church, and the compromises and vacillations to which it is exposed, may at least raise serious doubts whether its proper function is to be an innovator on the immemorial ministerial tradition of the historic institution to which it has constantly referred itself and claimed to be identified.

It is difficult to agree without qualification to the

proposition that "we must accept the deliberate judgments of our Church through its constituted authorities." There have been too many occasions in history when such acceptance was not possible.

A further criticism is that "the full meaning of a Catholic is that he accepts the judgment of his Church as opposed to his own individual judgment."

As opposed to his individual judgment—yes. But the difficulty is when the judgment of his local Church declares one principle and the judgment of the world-wide Church declares a contrary principle. It is not that he sets his private opinion against that of the Church, but that he cannot obey both the local and the world-wide judgment if they contradict: and his ultimate loyalty is to the universal.

It is, of course, quite true that "if the Church to which he belongs, through its proper constituted authority, expresses its judgment, that judgment ought to have a strong moral weight with him."

But the moral weight of that judgment will largely depend on the degree to which the local Church refers itself to the Universal Church, identifies itself with the world-wide practices and principles, and at every cost shrinks back from contradiction and from singularity. But if the local Church acts in conspicuous independence of the Universal, if, in fact, it actually repudiates the Universal, then its judgment cannot have much moral weight. Now it is this latter case of which Anglo-Catholics are apprehensive, and which the recent tendencies give them only too much cause to fear.

Anglo-Catholics are further criticised on the ground that for an individual to set his own judgment, or that

of any unconstitutional committee, or clique, against the judgment of the authorities of the Church he belongs to is simply Protestantism.

The possibility that the decisions of a local Church may be un-Catholic is unfortunately one which neither reason nor history permits us to rule out. To what extent a local Church is liable to err is not easy to define. It cannot be decided *a priori*. It must be decided by the facts.

Cyprian, with his Synod of eighty-seven North African Bishops, came unanimously to the decision that persons who had undergone a form of Baptism outside the Church must, when they join the Church, be baptised.[1] That decision was considered by the Church at large to be completely mistaken, and it did not prevail over the Church in Africa. Augustine held without hesitation that the decision of this large African Synod of Bishops, with S. Cyprian at their head, had departed from the earlier belief of the Church. Accordingly, he rejected the decision. He maintained that "as there were many things which the learned Cyprian might teach, so there was still something which the teachable Cyprian might learn. And the admonition which he gives us that we should go back to the fountain, that is, to Apostolic tradition, and thence turn the channel of truth to our times, is most excellent, and should be followed without hesitation." [2] Augustine went laboriously through the opinions expressed in Synod by the eighty-seven Bishops, and rejected them all.

Newman's reading of history is that in the early

[1] See Abp. Benson, *St. Cyprian*, pp. 371–2.
[2] *De Bapt.*, V. xxvi.

centuries "the Catholic people, in the length and breadth of Christendom, were the obstinate champions of Catholic truth, and the Bishops were not. Of course there were great and illustrious exceptions." [1]

Speaking of Church troubles in the fourth century, Newman said, "It is not a little remarkable that, though, historically speaking, the fourth century is the age of doctors, illustrated, as it is, by the saints Athanasius, Hilary, the two Gregories, Basil, Chrysostom, Ambrose, Jerome and Augustine (and all those saints bishops also except one), nevertheless in that very day the Divine tradition committed to the . . . Church was proclaimed and maintained far more by the faithful than by the Episcopate." [2]

Newman went on further to add, "In that time of immense confusion the divine dogma . . . was proclaimed, enforced, maintained and (humanly speaking) preserved far more by the *Ecclesia docta* than by the *Ecclesia docens;* that the body of the Episcopate was unfaithful to its commission, while the body of the laity was faithful to its baptism; that at one time the Pope, at other times a patriarchal, metropolitan or other great see, at other times General Councils said what they should not have said, or did what obscured and compromised revealed truth, while, on the other hand, it was the Christian people who, under Providence, were the ecclesiastical strength of Athanasius . . . and other great solitary confessors, who would have failed without them."

It is then a simple historic fact that not only individual Bishops have at times been rightfully resisted

[1] Newman, *Arians*, p. 445; Appendix, note 5, 1888.
[2] *The Rambler*, March 1859.

by their flocks, but also that Councils of Bishops have been similarly resisted, and that in both these cases the Catholic tradition was maintained by the ministry, or by the inferior clergy, or by the solitary confessor, against the superiors, leaders and authorities of the local Church. He would be a venturesome critic who called these maintainers of the Catholic tradition simple Protestants. But quite apart from disparaging epithets it is not easy to see what else the subordinates could have done if the Catholic tradition was to be preserved. What they felt was that the principles which their own Church had taught them were being changed.

It is unhappily only too true that the maintenance of Catholic principles in the Church of England during the past century, from the beginning of the Tractarian revival down to our own time, has only been secured by resistance to the action of individual Bishops, and indeed often to the united action of their majority.

It is necessary at this point to recall the principles of the ministry as declared in the Ordinal of the English Church. The Preface to the Ordinal in the Book of Common Prayer, which dates in substance from 1552, lays down the principles upon which the ministry of the English Church is based. It is based first on the historic existence as a matter of fact of an Episcopal and differentiated ministry from the Apostolic age continuously, appeal being made for this statement both to Scripture and to the ancient authors of the Primitive Church. Secondly, there is the fact of the exclusive regard universally attached to the same. These offices " were evermore held in such reverend estimation " in the Church before the sixteenth century,

" that no man might presume to execute any of them " except on the two conditions, that they were appointed by imposition of hands and " approved and admitted thereunto by lawful authority."

Here we must pause to ask what is meant by admission to ministry by lawful authority? There can be no doubt whatever that the only authority acknowledged as lawful for the purpose of admission to the ministry was Episcopal. The " reverent estimation " in which the ministry of Bishop, Priest and Deacon was held was an exclusive estimation. No other alternate or additional ministers shared that universal estimation in the Church before the Reformation.

The Preface then goes on to make the application of these two facts of continuity of use, and exclusiveness of estimation, to the Church of England. It is impossible not to observe how conservative all this is.

It is declared to be the intention of the English Church that these Orders may be continued and reverently used and esteemed in the Church of England as heretofore. And for the purpose that this intention may be secured, that these identical orders of ministry may be maintained in continuous use and esteem, it is declared to be essential that no man who has not already received Episcopal consecration or ordination shall be considered to possess these Orders, or be permitted to exercise any of these functions in the Church of England unless he is ordained according to the Anglican rite.

It is clear that in this Preface stress is laid on two matters : continuity of use and continuity of esteem. The English post-Reformation ministry is identified with the pre-Reformation ministry first in continuity of use. When it is affirmed that the Episcopal ministry

is to be continued in the English Church, there is manifestly implied the principle of constitutional identity with the pre-Reformation Church. The ancient orders of the Church are imitated: they are continued from the past. We must not miss the force of this intention of continuity of use. As the Church before the Reformation used this Episcopal ministry, so the Church in England after the Reformation is resolved to do the same. It was the intention of the local Church to maintain ministerial identity with the Universal Church.

But there is the second part to be noted. Beside the continuity of use there is to be a continuity of esteem. The English Church calls attention to the fact that the Episcopal ministry was in the pre-Reformation Church evermore held in reverent estimation. And, accordingly, the English Church affirms its intention to be that this ministry shall not only be continued in use, but also "reverently used and esteemed." This continuity of esteem is the aim of the English Church just as much as continuity of use. That is to say, that the construction which the English Church puts upon the Episcopal ministry is substantially the same as that which the pre-Reformation centuries had put upon it, and which was indeed the reason why they retained it in exclusive continuity of use.

In this Preface to the Ordinal it should further be noted that the relation conceived to exist between the "Church of Christ" and the "Church of England" is that of the world-wide to the local; and the determination expressed is that the local shall reproduce the ministerial characteristics of the world-wide. In which case it is inconceivable that the exclusive regard for

Episcopal ordination should be viewed as an optional matter on which local Churches might decide for themselves.

When Pope Leo XIII, in 1897, pronounced in his letter *Apostolicæ Curæ* that the Anglican Ordinal was defective in form and defective in intention to confer the Catholic ministry, the English Archbishops replied, "The succession and continuance of these offices from the Lord through the Apostles and the other ministers of the Primitive Church is also clearly implied in the ecclesiastical prayers which precede the words 'Receive the Holy Ghost.' Thus, the intention of our Fathers" (*i.e.* of the Reformation period) "was to keep and continue these offices which came down from the earliest times, and 'reverently to use and esteem them' in the sense, of course, in which they were received from the Apostles, and had been up to that time in use."[1]

The criticism is sometimes made that this answer of the English Archbishops to Leo XIII was only a reply made by two personages, and not by the combined English Episcopate. That, of course, is true. But at any rate it was an interpretation of the Anglican belief in the ministerial succession officially pronounced by the heads of two Provinces, at the time when Anglican orders were challenged by authorities at Rome. This answer certainly helped to retain the allegiance of many in the English Church.

In the alterations proposed by the Royal Commission for the Revision of the Liturgy in 1689, it was recommended that the Preface to the Ordinal should be changed, and the following substituted in its place:

"Whereas it has been the constant practice of the

[1] *Answer of the Archbishops of England*, 1897, p. 33.

ancient Church to allow of no Ordination of Priests, *i.e.* Presbyters, or Deacons, without a Bishop, and that it has been likewise the constant practice of this Church ever since the Reformation, to allow none that were not ordained by Bishops where they could be had: yet in regard that several in this Kingdom have, of late years, been ordained only by Presbyters, the Church being desirous to do all that can be done for Peace, and in order to the healing of our dissensions, has thought fit to receive such as have been ordained by Presbyters only to be ordained according to this office, with the addition of these words . . . if thou hast not been already ordained." That is to say, he was to be ordained by a Bishop conditionally. And this conditional ordination was recommended as an arrangement " by which, as the Church of England retains her opinions and practice which make a Bishop necessary to the giving of Orders, when he can be had, so she does likewise leave all such persons as have been ordained by Presbyters only the freedom of their own thoughts concerning their former Ordinations. It being withal expressly provided that this shall never be a precedent for the time to come, and it shall only be granted to such as have been ordained before the . . . day of . . ."

But although the advocates of this alteration refused to allow that their proposal might be a precedent, they themselves appealed to the action of Archbishop Bramhall in Ireland at the Restoration as a precedent for what they were proposing.

The peculiarity of this proposal for Conditional Reordination lies in the declaration that the person so ordained is acknowledged by the Church, which confers Episcopal ordination upon him, to be entirely

free to maintain that he is receiving nothing which he does not already possess. If the Church of England had accepted that proposal, it would have deliberately authorised two conflicting principles of ordination, the Episcopal and the Presbyterian. It would therefore have abandoned the principle of the Preface to its Ordinal.

At the same time, it should be noted that the Broad Churchman of 1689 did not venture to propose the temporary coexistence of Episcopal and non-Episcopal ministries within the Church of England.

Officially the Church of England, in its corporate acts, has adhered to the preface of the Ordinal. It has never, in its Synodical utterances, or in the practices for which the Church itself is collectively responsible, authorised the celebration of the Eucharist by a minister not episcopally ordained. It is generally felt that deviation from that principle of ordaining could not be reconciled with the English Ordinal. No individual Bishop at the present day would authorise a non-Episcopal minister to celebrate at an English altar, or if it were conceivable that he should venture, the collective Episcopate would not venture to support him. Conversely, a convert ordained priest in the Roman or Greek Church is accepted without any ordination. These simple facts, well known and undeniable, speak for themselves.

The Church of England has not only officially registered its deliberate determination to maintain exclusively within its precincts an Episcopal ordination; it has at the same time characteristically refrained from pronouncing any opinion whatever on the authority of non-Episcopal ministries in regard to the Eucharist in

other communions. And there have for a long time coexisted within it individuals, clerical and lay, who held different theories as to other types of ministry. Some individuals have maintained that an episcopally ordained minister, in other words a priest, is indispensable for the consecration of the Eucharist, wherever he can be had. Other individuals deny the authority of any one except a priest to celebrate. Others consider that Episcopal ordination is the local English rule, but not the only way in which the Sacrament can be rightfully celebrated. Each of these different schools of thought have believed that its theory is justified by the Anglican formularies. The Evangelical can always argue that the Church of England has never denied the right of ministers who are not priests to celebrate the Sacrament in non-Episcopal communities —which is true. The Anglo-Catholic can always argue that the Church of England, in its official regulations, has pronounced exclusively for the Catholic tradition—which is also true.

This fact, that various theories about the ministry are held by individuals within the comprehensiveness of the selfsame English Church, has led some controversialists to contend that the South Indian Scheme only proposes to carry into practice what already exists in theory in the Church of England. But this contention is obviously inexact. For whatever difference of theory individuals are permitted to hold within the English Church, all its clergy, without a solitary exception, are in the historic succession, and all its people receive the Sacrament from priests, and from none but priests. Neither in its official declarations nor in its practice of ordaining does the Church of

England ever allow anything else than priestly ministries.

The consequence of this Anglican comprehensiveness is that both Evangelicals and Anglo-Catholics have been able to abide within the Church of England.

But if the South Indian Scheme were accepted by the Church of England, all this would be changed. It proposes to allow men who are not priests to consecrate the Eucharist in the same Church with those who are priests. To do that is deliberately to make a minister equivalent to a priest in the Eucharistic rite. This is what the Church of England has never yet officially done. If it were to consent to this combination, it would have committed itself officially to the Protestant conception of the ministry as against the Catholic. And therefore an official pronouncement of that kind would reverse the attitude to which the Church of England has adhered for centuries.

The gravity of such a reversal of conceptions, were it enacted, is unmistakable. One reason why the Church of England has been able to retain Catholics within its fold is precisely because it has nowhere committed itself to the theory that any other ordination is equivalent to that conferred by the Episcopate. If the Church of England were to insist on committing itself to the Protestant conception, it would render dangerously insecure the loyalty of a very large section of its own members. It would incur the risk of a very serious secession. The fact is that it is deeply ingrained in the convictions of a considerable section of English Church people who are by no means extreme, that a priest is required to consecrate the Eucharist. And they could not be induced to participate in a Eucharist unless so

consecrated. This is a long-standing tradition which they would not surrender. This view is shared by a number of the Bishops. It is held by a very large number of the inferior clergy. They sought and accepted ordination from the Episcopate of the English Church because they were convinced that they simply dared not celebrate the Sacrament without that commission and that authority. I have been myself for forty years a priest, and I believe I say what thousands of other clergy of the English Church would endorse, in saying that we knelt to receive that awfully solemn commission because we believed that it was the Church's intention to confer the ancient ministry in the ancient meaning. We believed, as our Archbishops told Pope Leo XIII, that our Fathers retained the ancient ministry " in the sense in which it had been up to the time " of the Reformation " in use." What I submit is simply that these are facts. They are facts which to another school are most regrettable. None the less, they are facts. There are numbers of priests who have given their best years to the service of the English Church on that understanding. Were it otherwise they would not be here. And there is an unhappy misgiving haunting some of them, whether they will be allowed to end their days within the English Church. The incredible advice which some of them have received to join the Church of Rome is one which no qualified theologian could ever have given. The inconsistencies of the English Church do not demonstrate the rightfulness of the papal claims. Their perplexity is that whereas hitherto the ministerial principles of the Church of England are essentially Catholic, if this Indian proposal were accepted its ministerial principles

would become essentially Protestant. Thus the historic character of the English Church would be fundamentally changed by the introduction of a theory about the ministry to which that Church had never yet been officially committed.

The formidable difficulty which the Anglo-Catholic experiences in this mingling of ministries is one which will be felt in every Episcopal communion which takes its own traditional adherence to priesthood seriously. The utterances of Eastern theologians at Lausanne is only an illustration of the fact that the ancient Churches will not allow the authority of any man to consecrate the Eucharist if he is not a priest.

When advocates of the South Indian Scheme defend it on the ground that the irregularity of contrasted ministries would only exist for thirty years, and would afterwards be cancelled by the unity which is to be ultimately attained, they fail to realise the gravity of the proposal as seen from the Catholic standpoint. It is not a question of duration, but of intrinsic rightfulness. The difficulty is not whether it should happen often, but whether it should happen at all.

APPENDIX

THE SCOTTISH CONSECRATIONS OF 1610

ADVOCATES of the South India Reunion proposals have endeavoured to reconcile the English Church to the coexistence of ministers and of priests within the same communion by appealing to the circumstances under which Episcopacy was restored to Scotland in 1610. It is urged that, when the Presbyterian ministers, who were consecrated in London by Anglican Bishops, returned to Scotland, they did not ordain to the priesthood the ministers of their communion, but left them to discharge their functions simply in virtue of their Presbyterian commission. And yet, in spite of this fact, the Church of England was in communion with the Church of Scotland.

Since the story is being appealed to as a precedent, it becomes imperative that the incidents should be once again investigated. The facts are as follows. King James I resolved that the ministerial constitution of the Church of England should be conferred on the Presbyterian communion in Scotland. In order to secure this end, he nominated three Presbyterian ministers to bishoprics, and summoned them to England for consecration. In Stephen's *History of the Church of Scotland* (1848, i. 449) it is recorded that " at their first

audience the King informed them of his motives for calling them to London," and said that, "since he could not make them Bishops, nor could they assume that honour themselves . . . he had called them to England, that, being consecrated themselves, they might at their return give ordination to those at home, and so the adversaries' mouths be stopped who said that he took upon him to create Bishops and bestow spiritual offices, which he never did, nor would presume to do, acknowledging that right to belong to Christ alone and those whom He had authorised by His power."

So far for the preliminary movements on the part of the State. The matter was then transferred to the deliberations of the Church. The consecration of the Presbyterian ministers was discussed by the Bishops, among them Andrewes, Bishop of Ely, and Bancroft, Archbishop of Canterbury. A brief account of their deliberations is recorded by the Presbyterian Spottiswood, one of the three Scottish ministers who were brought to London for consecration. According to Spottiswood, Bishop Andrewes urged that the Scottish ministers ought first to be ordained priests, since they had received no ordination from a Bishop. Archbishop Bancroft, however, maintained that there was no necessity, on the ground that, where there were no Bishops, the ordination given by Presbyters must be esteemed lawful; otherwise, it might be doubted whether there was any lawful vocation in most of the Reformed Churches. In this opinion Bishop Andrewes, it is said, acquiesced.

There is, however, another version of this incident. Heylin, in his *History of the Presbyterians* (1670, p. 387),

says that when the Bishop of Ely hesitated concerning the capacity of the persons nominated to receive episcopal consecration, since none of them had been ordained priest, Archbishop Bancroft assured him that there was no such necessity to receive the order of priesthood, since "episcopal consecrations might be given without it." The Archbishop is said to have given examples from the Primitive Church of consecration direct to the Episcopate without ordination to the priesthood. There was the case of St. Ambrose, who was consecrated Bishop of Milan, and Nectarios, who was consecrated Patriarch of Constantinople, without receiving any intermediate Orders of any kind.

Now it is obvious that the difference between these two arguments is considerable. The one maintains that in certain cases Presbyters can lawfully ordain; the other that the priesthood is conferred in consecration to the Episcopate, since the greater includes the less. The former argument is Protestant; the latter Catholic. Hence arises the critical dispute. Did his Grace of Canterbury use both arguments? or only one? And if so, which? Are the two historians of equal worth? Spottiswood was present; Heylin was not. It has been said that Heylin must always be read with caution owing to his party spirit. But, as Canon Mason remarked, Heylin was connected with Laud, and Laud with Andrewes, and this connection gives some value to his testimony. Moreover, Spottiswood has been sharply criticised for historical inaccuracy (see Cook, *History of the Church of Scotland*, 1815, pp. 235–6).

In face of these contradictory opinions, it is a surer test to inquire which of the two arguments ascribed

to Archbishop Bancroft is more congenial to what is known to be his mind. As a recent writer says: "Perhaps the most striking point is that Bancroft should appear as the champion of Presbyterians!" (Wilson, *Episcopacy and Unity*, p. 173). Indeed, it is! Not only the most striking thing, but surely the most unlikely; for Archbishop Bancroft has recorded his belief about the ministry in his writings. He held that "there is no man living able to show where there was any Church planted ever since the Apostles' time but there the Bishop had authority over the rest of the Ministry." The impression which his belief about Episcopacy made on the Presbyterian Dr. Reynolds is recorded in the following words: "He seemeth to avouch the superiority which bishops have among us over the clergy to be God's own ordinance; though not by express words, yet by necessary consequence, in that he affirmeth their opinion, who oppugn that superiority, to be heresy." The historian Perry does not hesitate to conclude that Archbishop Bancroft did not argue upon the ground which Spottiswood seems to have supposed, that Orders given by Presbyters without Bishops were valid, but on the high ecclesiastical ground that the episcopal character might be conveyed at once, even to a layman, and that it contained within itself the lower functions of deacon and priest (*History of the Church of England*, i. 184). This conclusion seems entirely reasonable, since it explains why Bishop Andrewes acquiesced. It is, in any case, quite clear that Bishop Andrewes would have entirely approved of the ordination of a Presbyterian minister to the priesthood, for that was precisely the proposal which he placed before the English Bishops.

The consecration of the three Presbyterian ministers to the Episcopate for Scotland was carried into effect. In his *Ecclesiastical History of Scotland*, Skinner relates that " the three consecrated Bishops, on their return home, conveyed the episcopal powers, which they had now received in a canonical way, to their former titular brethren." " Thus after fifty years of confusion, and a multiplicity of windings and turnings . . . we see an Episcopal Church once more settled in Scotland, and a regular Apostolical Succession of episcopacy introduced."

In the next year a meeting of the Bishops and of some of the principal clergy was held in Edinburgh, when " the following royal direction was approved and adopted as a national rubric in ecclesiastical affairs: ' that no minister be admitted to any cure without an exact trial preceding and imposition of hands used in their ordination by the Bishops and two or three ministers whom he shall call to assist the service; and to the end an uniform order may be kept in the admission of ministers, that a form thereof may be imprinted and precisely followed by every Bishop.' "

These are apparently the facts in the Scottish consecrations of 1610. What are the proper inferences to be drawn from them?

A clear distinction must be made between the intention of the English Church in conferring Episcopal Orders on Presbyterians and the degree to which that intention was practically observed by the recipients. The intention of the consecrators, as explained by the King, was certainly to bring Presbyterian Scotland into constitutional identity with Episcopal England. Not a word was there nor suggestion that the Church of

England was prepared to recognise a Presbyterian and an Episcopal Ministry coexisting for a time within the Scottish Church, but not a word was said to indicate that, so long as Scotland had Bishops, it was indifferent whether it everywhere had priests.

There are very obvious reasons which might prevent the Scottish Bishops from conferring priesthood on their Presbyterian clergy. The Scottish divines were unwilling to admit that they themselves ought to be ordained priests before they were consecrated Bishops. They were unwilling because they feared the conclusions which their Presbyterian countrymen would draw (Neal, *History of the Puritans*, 1837, i. 440). And on their return to Scotland, it may have been practically impossible to induce their ministers to be ordained priests. They may not even have had the courage to try. But their failure to carry out the intentions with which they were consecrated does not justify the inference that the Church of England approved irregularities to which it never gave official consent; which, so far as the evidence goes, were never mentioned beforehand nor officially announced afterwards; and which cannot be reconciled with the principle of the Anglican ordination.

A comparison between the doctrine concerning the Episcopate taught by the English theologians of that time, by Lancelot Andrewes and Archbishop Bancroft, and the doctrine taught by the Scottish theologians, such as Bishop Forbes of Aberdeen, proves conclusively that consecration was being offered in one sense and accepted in another. As Dr. Selwyn has said, "The English Episcopate rested on a theological basis. Our English divines made good the claim for Episcopacy

as a system of government appointed for His Church by God. In Scotland, on the other hand, no clear case was ever made out for an Episcopacy of Divine origin." The Scottish idea of episcopal consecration was not calculated to enable it to stand the shock of a great political and ecclesiastical upheaval. "Only something which presented itself as an essential of the Church's structure could have done that. An otiose expedient, however consonant with Scripture and antiquity, was doomed."

Another critic, by no means on the Anglican side, remarks that the kind of Episcopacy which found a home in Scotland during this period may be described as "Anglo-Presbyterianism."

Obviously the proper moral to be drawn from these incidents is the danger of conferring episcopal consecration on persons who have not been instructed in the Catholic principles of the Ministry which is being conferred upon them. But by no possibility can these confused and irregular issues be regarded as a reasonable precedent to which members of the English Church can now appeal.

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